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Glen A. Pierce

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May 1984





# Of sheep and shepherds

by Jane Musser

Lydia, our curly headed one-year-old, is a delight to us. At times she's playful; at other times she's quiet. Usually she's content to be by herself, but she always perks up when we come in sight. Lydia has gentle brown eyes and a cute nose. We especially like the way her two little horns curl around her ears. Lydia is our pet lamb.

I'd wanted a lamb as a pet since I was a child. Last year we bought Lydia. We named her after Paul's first convert at Philippi who was also a seller of purple cloth. What an appropriate name for our first wool producer!

Since we got Lydia, portions of Scripture have had more meaning to us than before. Let me explain just two of our enlightened passages.

We tie Lydia in our yard on a long leash, just like a pet dog would be tied. She has her own "sheep house" and feed dish. We have a corner lot on a rather busy road. Many times people in cars slow down, toot their horns, and call to Lydia. Quite a few make baaing noises in an attempt to get Lydia to respond to them. She never stops eating, never looks up, never gives them the satisfaction of one little baa!!

Lydia isn't deaf. She just does not respond to unfamiliar voices. If my husband or I call Lydia's name, whether we are in the car driving by or in the yard working, Lydia stops chewing her cud, stands up, looks for us, and baas. Lydia knows our voice. We simply say her name and Lydia responds. She knows us. She trusts us.

In our Christian lives we should be able to hear our Lord's voice and distinguish it from all others. We become familiar with the voice of God by listening; then, we can contentedly chew our cud, ignoring all other attempts to get our attention. When the Master calls,

we are ready and quick to respond. We know his voice. We aren't fooled by those who would imitate the Master's voice, or by those who would attempt to sound like another sheep. We learn our Master's voice by spending time with him, listening to him (John 10).

One morning when we went to feed Lydia, we discovered she had broken her leash and was nowhere in sight. We looked and looked and called and called. But no lamb appeared. We checked all the open land and our only alternative was the woods, with thick undergrowth, that borders our land. I stood at the edge of the woods and called Lydia's name over and over. Finally, far down the woods in the gully I heard the faint baa of our lamb. I continued calling and heard movement in the brush. The baas were getting closer. Finally Lydia broke out of the undergrowth. She was as glad to see me as I was to see her.

My husband and I surmise that Lydia did not purposely run away, nor did she go directly to the gully. She just sort of went astray. She probably saw a bright

yellow dandelion close to the woods and went to nibble it. Then some white, sweet-smelling honeysuckle looked good at the edge of the woods. Down in the woods was some tender young green grass. On and on she went until she no longer knew where she was. She just carelessly wandered away. None of the things she did were bad in and of themselves, but the end result was that Lydia was lost.

In Isaiah, the Scriptures record that "all we like sheep have gone astray." We may or may not willfully say, "Today I will stop following the ways of the Lord." But we begin to be careless in the little things of our lives. We aren't careful about what we are seeking. We follow after so many trivial things that eventually we lose sight of the important things. We have sought our own way and not his way.

In addition to simply being an enjoyable pet, Lydia has in some cases brought the truths of Scripture much closer to our home. We have seen ourselves both as the sheep and the shepherd.



Jane and Harry Musser live near Etters, Pa.



... continuing our coverage of Latin American concerns, Roy Sider reports on his conversations with Enrique Palacios, executive minister of the Brethren in Christ Church in Nicaragua (p. 27). Just after I received Roy's report, the April 13 issue of *Evangelical Newsletter* arrived, with a report by editor William J. Peterson on his own fact-finding trip to Nicaragua. There are striking parallels in the two reports.

Peterson concludes, "U.S. evangelicals should not be naive about the East-West struggle, but we must question CIA involvement in mining of Nicaragua's seaports, terrorizing civilian areas, and allocating millions for the overthrow of a nation that has been relatively stable for the past five years. . . . Unless the U.S. is careful, its tactics will drive the Sandinistas to the Soviets as their only port in the storm. All other ports have been mined."



*Juana Garcia, Brethren in Christ pastor in Cuba, preaches to a congregation during her recent visit to the Brethren in Christ Church in Nicaragua.*

\* \* \*

In submitting "To the North Americans" (p. 4), the author suggested "If you decide to use this, I think it would be best not to put my name on it. I would like the issues to be evaluated on their own merit, without personalities being considered. Also, I wouldn't want to imply any reflection on my own pastor. Actually, I wrote this article before we moved to —, and just recently decided to dust it off and submit it." (No, it isn't written by the present or former "Onesimus.")

And a word about H. J., whose initials appear with the editorial "Father, may I?" Helen Johns, a member of the Nappanee congregation, works part-time in the editorial department—assisting with the *Visitor* and The Foundation Series.

# evangelical VISITOR

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# To the North Americans

## The 14<sup>th</sup> Epistle\*

*\*This epistle has been translated into the PRV (President Reagan Version), King James being long dead. It is titled similarly to Paul's other epistles—such as "To the Thessalonians" and "To the Galatians," which we refer today just as "Thessalonians" or "Galatians."*

**P**aul—called to be a brother in Christ some nineteen hundred years ago, who subsequently traveled throughout the Roman Empire rapping about Jesus in the streets and shopping malls, in the synagogues and city parks, and who has since shed his dilapidated shell and joyfully awaits with other saints that day when we shall all receive our crown of life—

To the churches throughout North America. Greeting. Grace be unto you and peace: not the shallow, contradictory type of the placard-wavers and anti-war demonstrators; but the same, inexplicable peace we experienced, that no more needs to be fazed by nuclear bombs than it was by Roman sabres.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, for I have heard of your faithfulness to the truths we delivered unto the first churches. I have heard too of your phenomenal missionary activity, reaching out to countries we didn't even know existed. (How I would love to be back there in the harness again, preaching Jesus to some of these Gentiles!)

However, although I could elaborate further on other of your commendable features, I feel constrained by my obligation to remain faithful to my heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. Thus I write this epistle to you in order to bring your attention several aspects of your church life that are in need of correction. Indeed, I marvel at how far afield you have strayed, not so much from the doctrines we delivered unto you, but from some of the practices we found to be vital to the spiritual life of our believers and the growth of our churches.

Several of the deficiencies I have noted stem from one basic misconception—your belief that the Lord's work can only, or

can best, be done by specialists. This has led you to consign his business to a few trained professionals, while concurrently exempting from responsibility any who are non-professionals, i.e., those not in "full-time Christian service."

You pastors conceive of your shepherd role as solely that of feeding the flock. This indeed you have done—until the sheep have become so obese they can hardly waddle! You gather your lambs close about you, taking great care to keep them from straying to another fold, and you feed them regularly three times a week.

But what do you give them by way of exercise? What do you provide to keep their bodies agile and their spirits alert? Do you not realize that sheep require activity if they are to remain healthy?

Indeed, it has come to my attention that hardly any of your run-of-the-mill Christians share their faith with their friends and acquaintances, that when they occasionally attempt such a frightening feat, they dissolve into a puddle of embarrassed ineptitude. Frankly, your believers are about as effective at witnessing as a Talmudic scholar would be running the 400 meters.

Instead, your disciples stress their "light-shining" prowess. They pride themselves on what carefully honest, upright lives they lead, and they even have the gall to label this witnessing!

**M**y dear brethren, what has happened to the church of Jesus Christ? Is this the sort of Christian testimony you learned from us? Is this kind of light-shining that caused our contemporaries to accuse us of being world-revolutionaries, people who turned their world upside down? (See Acts 17:6.)

I suspect that the sad state of affairs in your churches in North America is probably a holdover from that era during which the organized church sank to its lowest depravity and uselessness—you still call them the "Dark" Ages, do you not? It was during this time that specialization really came into its own. The church of that era carefully compartmentalized its tasks, beginning with its chief bishop, or pope, and continuing in graduated progression on down to the parish priest.

In the division of labor, no assignment was given to the laity. Nothing was expected of them, other than their presence at prescribed functions. Consequently, the group who had been in our day dynamic, aggressive proclaimers of the good news,

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***I write this epistle to you  
in order to bring  
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that are in need of correction.***



# The minister: pastor and prophet

by Harvey Sider

Should we anticipate that a pastor will fulfill all the expectations of a congregation? Should a pastor endeavor to exhibit all the gifts?

What is the first image that springs to your mind with the word "prophet"? In all probability, you thought of one who "foretells" future events. *Christianity Today* (January 13, 1984) appropriately capitalizes on this imagery in "Orwell as Prophet: A Mixed Bag" (page 10) and "A Prophetic Message . . ." (page 13).

However, more basically, a prophet denotes a "forthteller" of truth. Foretelling was predicated upon forthtelling. The prophet was set apart to speak of God's holiness and justice, and man's responsibility to respond with righteous living.

Today, voices call for the pastor to be a prophet more in the sense of bold proclamation than in predicting future events. But how do the pastoral and prophetic ministry interface with each other?

In some ways, these two ministries seem to be quite divergent and, at times, they may even move in opposite directions. But when understood in the context of scriptural teaching on spiritual gifts and the desirability of a holistic ministry, these functions can become complementary.

Paul indicates, in Ephesians 4:11-12, that the Holy Spirit has gifted leaders for a wide variety of ministries. However, not all of these gifts are lodged in any one person. Some are called to be prophets, others teachers, some evangelists, and still others pastors. Even though

we know this, all too often the assumption is that a pastor should, in fact, be gifted in all of these areas.

Listen to expectations expressed by people within a single congregation: "I wish our pastor would give an altar call every Sunday morning." The person seemed to be implying that the pastor should be an evangelist. Every Sunday morning should result in people seeking the Lord at the altar.

From another: "I wish our pastor would be bold to speak out against sin." Obviously, the individual meant that the pastor should identify sins which were particularly annoying to that individual: greed, or gossip, or gambling, or adultery, or the arms race, or alcoholism, or. . . .

Still another: "I wish our pastor would teach deep truths from the Word rather than entertain us with stories."

Should we anticipate that a pastor will fulfill all such expectations of a congregation? Should a pastor endeavor to exhibit all the gifts, and, if not, how can a pastor live in healthy tension between the need to cultivate other skills and at the same time focus on "pastoring"? Surely, he must assign some priority to numerous duties which are an integral part of his ministry. But to help clarify

*continued on page 7*



became during that era apathetic, pathetic *listeners* to professional proclaimers of the news.

You North Americans deplore the condition of the church of the Middle Ages, but what about you in your enlightened twentieth-century churches? Have you ever stopped to think how many of your worship rituals derive—with little alteration—from the Dark Ages? Where do you think the “pastoral prayer” came from? Or the sermon delivered by the same professional each week? Do you not also expect practically nothing of your laity except their presence at services?

Indeed, you pastors are obsessed with a “fill-up-the-pews” fixation. You constantly exhort your disciples to attend church, as if this were the totality of Christian service. You have emphasized this aspect until your saints have come to believe that the higher their aggregate of church attendance days, the larger their reward will be in heaven.

It is true your laity did not derive this concept from direct teaching, but rather from indirect emphasis. You did not tell them specifically that God’s sole requirement for discipleship consists of church attendance and keeping themselves unspotted by the world, but the idea has come through. It is a direct result of your constant stress on the necessity of your members being at church services and your parallel neglect of emphasis on what real Christian service actually includes.

In like manner, as you North Americans have become noted for your spectator athletics, so too in the spiritual realm you practice spectator Christianity. As the most strenuous physical exercise of most of you is driving to the stadium to watch professional athletes perform, so too your believers’ greatest exertion is going to church to watch professional Christians at work.

**N**ow, my brethren, do not misunderstand me. I am not forgetting the exhortation someone wrote about not forsaking your assembling together (Hebrews 10:25). But you neglect to finish the quotation. Indeed, what saith the Scripture? The remainder of the verse tells what you are to do when you have those assemblings—you are to “exhort *one another!*”

Those are the kind of meetings we had. When we gathered for worship, our saints exhorted *one another*; *every one* present praised God in a variety of media; *each* disciple was free to share his insights from the Lord. I explained how this should work in my letter to the saints at Colossae:

“... teach and admonish *one another* with all wisdom, ... sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Col. 3:16).

***“I want you to realize that the cherished patterns to which you have become so accustomed did not exist from time immemorial . . . and that some violate basic spiritual principles.”***

In this manner our believers became molded into one body in Christ. In this way too the Holy Spirit had free course in their midst, and as they gave expression to the work of the Spirit in their hearts, they made themselves available for further spiritual blessings.

Granted, we occasionally had special speakers, as for example when I passed by on one of my missionary trips or one of the brethren came out from Jerusalem for a visit. These, however, were rare occasions. It was certainly not our usual practice to have the same preacher each week, or even to have only one exhorter per service.

I am certain that if our believers had sat and listened every week to a pastor, even if he had been one of our big-name apostles like Peter or John, the congregation would probably have been thrilled and inspired—but they would also have quickly become stagnant. You simply cannot bottle up living water and keep it fresh!

Instead of a single individual presiding over our local churches, we had a group of several. Sometimes we called them elders; other times, overseers or bishops. If you will read our history carefully, you will discover that there is no record of any of our churches being led by a single shepherd, or pastor.

For example, in Antioch we had a group of prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1-3); at Ephesus it was a body of elders (Acts 20:17, 28); even at our headquarters church in Jerusalem, a group of elders presided in conjunction with the apostles (Acts 15:4, 6, 22-23).

It was my pattern in establishing churches to ordain several elders for each one (Acts 14:23). I left Titus on Crete for this purpose (Titus 1:5). James advised that the elders (plural) of the church be called in whenever a healing service was to be held (James 5:14). Peter in his letter to the churches throughout Asia Minor singled out the elders (plural) as those having care over each church there (I Peter 5:1-5).

**B**ut what do you do when you gather together on the first day of the week? Who does the exhorting; who prays; who reads the Scriptures? Almost without exception your professional does everything. My brethren, do you not see that you have made of your pastor a showman, a performer, a star—whereas he should be instead of a producer, a trainer, or to use one of your vernacular expressions, a talent scout?

No wonder your saints are so lethargic! No wonder your services are so dead! Ours would soon have fossilized, too, if we had conducted meetings in like manner.

Do you remember what I wrote to the Ephesian church? I stated in that letter that God has given different spiritual gifts to each individual and added that he has appointed some to be preachers and teachers; others, evangelists, pastors, miracle-workers, healers, helpers, administrators, and glossolalia experts (Eph. 4:11-13; cf. I Cor. 12:28-30). But did you notice that I went on to add what the purpose was for all those specialists in the church: “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Eph. 4:12).

Now please understand, brethren, that I am writing these things unto you, not because I have any desire to disrupt your organizations; nor am I seeking to defrock your ministers. As a good missionary, I know better than to try to change your cultural practices. However, I want you to realize that the cherished patterns to which you have become so accustomed

*continued on page 8*



In our computerized and technological society, we have moved away from pastoral or agricultural terms. Thus the implications of the word "pastor" may have become cloudy. It's a word which has had rich meanings in the Brethren in Christ Church.

our expectations of the pastor, we need to take a new look at his function and then how prophecy can be used in a complementary way.

In both the Hebrew (*raah*) and the Greek (*poimēn*), pastor literally means "feeder." *Poimēn*, in turn, derives from a root which means "to protect." So the word "pastor" points specifically to a shepherd who cares for his sheep. In our computerized and technological society, we have moved away from terminology which is pastoral or agricultural. Thus, the implications of pastor may have become somewhat cloudy. It would be helpful to regain a renewed appreciation for a word that has had rich meaning in the Brethren in Christ Church.

The most-loved psalm, Psalm 23, portrays the Lord as the true shepherd who cares for, and who feeds his people. He cares for his people in different ways. He leads them beside still waters. He provides green pastures for their nourishment. He restores the soul. He leads into paths of righteousness, and even in the midst of enemies, he prepares a table for his people. The pastor, as feeder/protector, has a primary function in providing for all the needs of his flock.

Following his resurrection, Jesus used similar imagery when he instructed Peter to "feed my sheep." Peter's primary task was to care for the believers. The significance of the circumstance and the injunc-

tion by Christ had such a profound effect upon Peter that, in later years, he, in turn, used the same symbolism. He instructed the pastors to "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (I Peter 5:2).

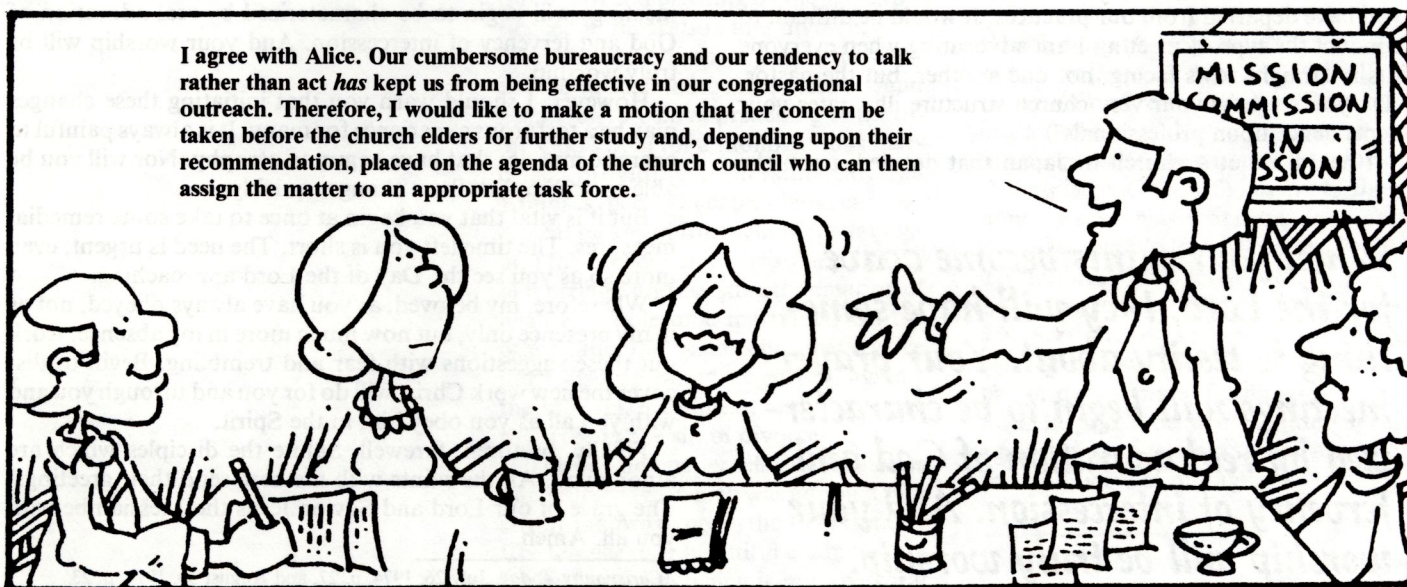
Paul, one of the greatest missionary statesmen of all times, expressed his concern about the pastoral function. In his charge to the elders at Ephesus, he encouraged them to "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28).

Several fascinating pastoral passages in the Old Testament came from the prophet Jeremiah. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15). Later, he said, "I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them" (Jer. 23:4). Jeremiah's perception of the ideal pastor was of one who diligently studied God's will and word so that he could feed people with understanding and thereby lead them in the way of God.

Undoubtedly, it would be ideal for congregations to agree that the pastor should work within the guiding principles of the early church as found in Acts 6. Pastors do need more time to give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word, but to care for a body of believers ordinarily entails involvement in many responsibilities. Some of these may be administrative, others may be

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I agree with Alice. Our cumbersome bureaucracy and our tendency to talk rather than act *has* kept us from being effective in our congregational outreach. Therefore, I would like to make a motion that her concern be taken before the church elders for further study and, depending upon their recommendation, placed on the agenda of the church council who can then assign the matter to an appropriate task force.



Joel Kauffmann



did not exist from time immemorial, nor even from the period when churches were first established. And I want you to know also that some of your customs violate basic spiritual principles as to how the body of Christ is intended to function.

One of your pastors who has caught these ideas and put them into practice in his church is C. Marlin Hardman of the Barcroft Bible Church in Arlington, Virginia. He states:

*" . . . if we pastor-teachers are to fulfill our calling, we must brush away the longstanding convention that some members of the Body are 'clergy' and the others are 'laity.' . . . this distinction is simply not found in the Bible. . . . 'Every Christian is a believer-priest!' we argue, but we seldom structure our ministries so that every Christian can exercise his God-given privileges and abilities as such. . . .*

*"One of the reasons more laymen don't get involved in work of service is the attitude we convey—jealousy over 'our ministry,' insisting that certain positions and duties are reserved for 'professional Christian workers.' . . .*

*Now I see myself as an equipper of men for the work of service, and my pulpit teaching ministry has become more meaningful. I evaluate my ministry now not in terms of meetings held, sermons preached, people counseled, offerings received, but in terms of lives developed for the work of the ministry."<sup>1</sup>*

Another church leader puts it this way:

*" . . . the church is not calling the laymen to tasks which challenge their creativity and call forth the best of their God-given abilities and gifts. The church usually asks the layman, who many times is qualified in education and experience far beyond the level of the pastor, to do those tasks which the pastor himself dislikes and feels below his dignity. If Jesus had operated according to our style in many parishes, he would have kept the twelve that he recruited busy planting flowers on the synagogue lawn and scraping paint from the Temple."<sup>2</sup>*

Further, brethren, you may find it advisable to think along some new lines as regards your church architecture. Here, too, you have departed from our practices. It would be difficult to conduct the type of meeting I am advocating when everyone sits in straight rows facing, not one another, but the pastor. (Do you see how your very church structure illustrates your dependence upon professionals?)

I heard about a church in Japan that decided, upon the

***When your saints become active for the Lord, they will have something to testify about. Your prayer meetings will begin to be characterized by real adoration of God and fervency of intercession. And your worship will be truly worship.***

construction of its new sanctuary, to change from its previous custom of sitting around in a circle. Whereupon, in their modernization effort, this church installed "western" type pews, arranging them neatly row upon row, and facing them all toward a "western" pulpit.

However, it was not long before the members of this congregation noticed with dismay that the warmth and spontaneity that had previously characterized their meetings was beginning to fade. Their pastor observed that, whereas before numerous members of the group had participated in the service, now they declined on the grounds that they did not feel adequately trained to stand behind a pulpit.

Fortunately, the pastor, being a man of discernment, suggested to his congregation a simple solution to what they had feared was a serious spiritual malady. He merely rearranged the pews, dispensed with the pulpit, and seated his parishoners in the friendly, equalizing circle they had had before. It was not long before fervor returned to their meetings; once again laity participated freely; and the "spiritual" problem was resolved.

**F**inally, brethren, I urge you to look about you in your churches. Do you not discover in your midst several to whom the Spirit has given the gift of exhortation, of teaching, of evangelism? Do not let them remain idle any longer. Begin to use them. There is no reason you pastors should preach all the sermons, read the responsive readings, do the praying, visit the sick, or counsel those with problems. Look for ways to involve all the saints in real ministry.

And make your services times of real worship. As Mr. Busby says again:

*"We need to explore creative methods to make our love to God more spontaneous; it must be more of a celebration. We are so programmed that we can't depend on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is just a part of our theology."<sup>3</sup>*

My dear brethren, if you will take my advice in these matters, you will be amazed at the results. Your testimony meetings will come alive. When your saints become active for the Lord, they will have something to testify about. Your prayer meetings will begin to be characterized by real adoration of God and fervency of intercession. And your worship will be truly worship.

However, I should warn you that initiating these changes may be a torturous experience for many. It is always painful to exercise muscles that have begun to atrophy. Nor will you be able to accomplish these changes quickly.

But it is vital that you begin at once to take some remedial measures. The time left you is short. The need is urgent, even more so as you see the Day of the Lord approaching.

Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out these suggestions with fear and trembling. Begin to discover the new work Christ will do for you and through you and with you all as you obey him in the Spirit.

Finally, brethren, farewell. Salute the disciples which are among you. All the saints with me here send their greetings. The grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Messiah be with you all. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>Christianity Today, July 26, 1974, p. 27, and August 30, 1974, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel Busby, The Wesleyan Advocate, March 4, 1974, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



**The integrity of a pastor's ministry is maintained as long as he keeps a balance between his pastoral function of feeding and nurturing, and his prophetic function of speaking forthrightly against the evils which cause so much hurt.**

evangelistic, and still others may be prophetic in nature. Few pastors enjoy the luxury of serving in multiple staff situations where they can use, with excellence, their gifts and training in a specialized area with a single focus. The large majority of pastors will need to provide leadership in many ways, including the prophetic role.

However, because ministers are pastors ("feeders," "protectors") at heart, they can become the most authentic prophetic voice of the church. By the very nature of their calling, they deeply care about the hurts and needs of people. While this may focus primarily on their flock, the compassionate heart reaches into the community and stretches to the far corners of the country and around the world.

**T**he integrity of a pastor's ministry is maintained as long as he keeps a balance between his pastoral function of feeding and nurturing and his prophetic function of speaking forthrightly against the evils which cause so much hurt. The prophetic and pastoral aspects of leadership can be exercised at the same time and serve to complement each other.

How these two functions can complement each other can be seen in a current issue with which the church is dealing: the dilemma of divorce and remarriage. A person who is wrestling through such a trauma needs a supporting, caring pastor and Christian community. The pastor and the Christian body must model and provide healing to those torn and bleeding by the loss experienced in separation and divorce.

At the same time, a prophetic word can be articulated both positively and negatively. Positive preaching concerning God's plan for a monogamous marriage, providing leadership through seminars, personal counselling, etc., are typical means of forthtelling (prophesying) the biblical and Christian morality of marriage, and assisting the creation of healthy, wholesome marriages. On the other hand, the pastor's prophetic voice must also be raised negatively against the self-ism, greediness, and autonomy that creates the sin of divorce.

The position paper relating to divorce and remarriage, which was adopted by a strong majority vote in the 1974 General Conference, is a beautiful example of a biblical position which is both pastoral and prophetic. In this document, we

uphold the sanctity of marriage and cry out against the sin of divorce, but at the same time we reach out in ministry and accept those who have been divorced and remarried. To do both is to model and to be faithful to Jesus Christ, who repudiated all sin but accepted all sinners.

Moses was pastor and prophet par excellence (Deut. 34:10). He was so pastoral that when God wanted to destroy the people under his charge, Moses was prepared to sacrifice his life rather than have his people destroyed. But he also thundered out against the evil of their rebellion against God. Because he personally identified with his people and suffered with them, he was able, on the one hand, to speak out and take action against evil, but also to shepherd them for 40 long and difficult years (Heb. 11:24-27).

As Jesus ministered to the people of his day, he too was "moved with compassion." In his pastoral function, Jesus touched, fed, healed, and cared for people. At the same time, out of a deep sense of righteousness and identity with people to whom he ministered, he occasionally acted and spoke prophetically against the abuses of his generation.

**T**he prophetic task of telling forth the will of God involves a pastor in speaking about "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" (Acts 24:25). However, it is also important to note that Paul began that same message to Felix in a pastoral tone for he spoke "concerning the faith in Christ" (Acts 24:24).

We expect the pastor to serve the church in many ways. In fact, 13 specific duties are listed on page 250 of the 1982 *General Conference Minutes*. Six pages in the *Minister's Manual* (pages 15-20) further relate to the pastoral function of the ministry. Obviously, many of these ministries, such as visitation, are a part of the warp and woof of pastoral work. To "faithfully shepherd the flock" (*General Conference Minutes*, 1982, page 250, Section 3, d.) suggests that a caring, feeding ministry is basic to all that a pastor does. And in fulfilling this function, he must be alert to and speak against evils that are so much a part of the worldview of our age.

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*Harvey Sider is bishop of the Canadian Conference. Scriptural quotations are from the King James Version.*



## A response to

# To the North Americans

## The 14th Epistle\*

by Harvey R. Sider, author of  
"The Minister: Pastor and Prophet"

I welcome the opportunity to respond to the excellent article on "To the North Americans." Such a brief reply fails to do justice to the concepts articulated, but hopefully my few words will stimulate continued dialogue.

The message is a timely reminder to the worldwide fellowship of the Brethren in Christ Church. Cuba is perhaps the only country where we do not have salaried "specialists," but even there they have fine leadership. While the article seems a bit oversimplified and exaggerated in places, the basic thrust of "every person involvement" needs to be sounded again and again.

Most, if not all, the pastors I know would welcome such a "revival." Romans 12:1 is a clear call to every believer for commitment and service. Interestingly, Paul follows this with a few examples of specialized ministry such as teaching, preaching, giving, and encouraging. Even these specifics, limited as they are, suggest the expectation (delimited in Romans 12:1) that every person would be involved in ministry.

I was somewhat surprised at the statement (in paragraphs) that we believe "that the Lord's work can only, or can best be done by specialists." This could be due to our "hearing" mechanism. It was my understanding that the Brethren in Christ believe the work not only can but should be done by all. It can best be done by every person discerning his/her gifts and enhancing his/her capabilities through training. Thank the Lord, many people in our congregations are doing the Lord's work with excellence. They are not leaving it up to the pastors alone.

It is true that our leadership system has changed over the years from the "multiple ministry" which was basically given without pay to a single-salaried pastor, except in our larger churches where there may be several staff persons. Various factors have undoubtedly contributed to the change, including our understanding that the Scriptures teach that the laborer is worthy of his hire and the increasing compartmentalization of life.

One cannot read the New Testament without being impressed with the strength and quality of that leadership. While the "apostles and elders" were only a part of the church, they certainly did exert considerable influence in the qualitative and quantitative growth of the early church. Consider Peter's sermon in Acts 2 and Paul's teachings in his letters. On occasion, Paul apparently preached a sermon so long that a young man went to sleep and fell from a window ledge. In addition, both Peter and Paul were anxious that the elders would "feed the flock."

Using the imagery of the preceding paragraph, it is well to note that it is not an either-or situation. The apostles called for "every person" involvement, each using specific gifts. Leaders "elder or laity," was called to imitate Christ and be a vital functioning part of the body.

Discipleship goes far beyond "filling up the pews" and "fattening the sheep." Brethren in Christ are interested in both qualitative and quantitative growth. Growth that leads to a deepening of one's relationship to God must find expression in renewed concern for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of people. To exclude one, or to elevate one at the expense of the other, is not being true to the gospel. My contacts with Brethren in Christ indicates that we affirm the saying, "When the church exhales disciples, it inhales converts."

All members of the body need to be involved in outreach ministries and not just the pastor. To bring a balanced perspective to such a statement, several things must be remembered. These include:

1. Scripture indicates that not everyone is gifted or called to the same ministry.
2. Lifestyle evangelism is possible for everyone.
3. Equipping or training is an important ingredient for more effective ministry.

The slogan "each one win one" recognizes all three of these principles. However, this does not mean there is no place

for the specialist. When an operation is performed on the more intricate parts of the body such as the brain, it is good to realize that there is a specialist available. Elders and laity are interdependent.

Need we be reminded that Christianity is supra-cultural and generational? Particular forms and structures are helpful only as they assist us to "worship and obey the triune God and to proclaim His Gospel to all people" (*Manual of Doctrine and Government*). We must remain sensitive to, but not be bound by, time and culture. Some will be better able to worship in spirit and in truth without the leadership of a specialist. Others will prefer and benefit by a strong leader to assist in the same purpose.

Pastors will be the first to rejoice in 100 percent lay involvement. Perhaps on a future occasion someone could articulate creative methods to achieve this ideal. ■

RESPONSES



# The minister: pastor and prophet

by the author of  
"The North Americans—  
The 14th Epistle"

The basic premise of this article, that a pastor needs to both nurture his flock like a shepherd and speak out against the evils of our age like a prophet, is certainly indisputable. As the author states, any pastor who seeks to care for his flock adequately must keep a balanced emphasis between these two aspects of his ministry.

However, the author does not solve the dilemma he presents in his introduction—the inability of any one pastor to possess all the gifts necessary to care for the needs of his congregation. The writer has the traditional concept of the pastoral role, the concept I identify in "The 14th Epistle" as deriving from the medieval church. One example is the statement: "Because ministers are pastors . . . at heart, they can become the most authentic prophetic voice of the church."

Although this may be true in some situations, it is not the ideal. There should be several "lay" persons in every congregation who are also "pastors at heart," or who have also been given an "authentic prophetic voice" by the Lord.

The author struggles with the common expectation that the pastor should be Mr. Everygift, for he realizes that the facts of human nature and the obvious manner in which the gifts of the Spirit have been distributed negate this possibility.

It is this concept of the pastoral role that has led some pastors to become frustrated and angry at the unrealistic expectations heaped upon them; that has caused them to experience painful loneliness, since they assume they must carry the burden of the ministry alone, for the most part. It is this concept that often results in pastors smoldering dangerously close to burnout from the unrelieved, wearying drudgery of having too much to do and too little time to do it in. It is this concept that leads all too often to the pastor's neglect of his time with his own chief Shepherd, resulting in the eventual shrivelling up of his spiritual vitality.

This is the dilemma I address in my "epistle." I have suggested that it does not need to be this way. The solution I presented would solve this very problem. If, instead of trying to do the work of the ministry themselves, pastors would devote their energies to training the members of their congregation to do it, they would find deliverance from the impossible treadmill. And, a serendipitous byproduct, they would discover that the members of their congregation would grow much more rapidly as disciples.

As Jethro told Moses when *he* was trying to carry the ball alone, "What you are doing is not good" (Ex. 18:17). Pastors would do well to follow Jethro's advice and also seek out "able men from all the people" and "place such men over the people." We appoint deacons, but we do not give them an essentially spiritual ministry, as any careful reading of their listed duties as well as the examination of the practices of most churches will verify.

The football coach is a very hard-working individual, but it would be ridiculous for him to try to play all the team positions himself.

Definitions of the pastoral role often stress its leadership and administrative aspects, but all too often give only token reference to training and disciple-making. (Take a look at p. 250 of the 1982 *General Conference Minutes*.) Yet the latter should be the pastor's predominant, overriding concern.

Peter Wagner, in his recent book, *On the Crest of the Wave*, makes this same point:

*"God expects every member of the Body (of Christ) to function . . . according to his or her spiritual gifts . . . The problem is that many Christians do not realize they have a spiritual gift, and therefore they either do not use it or they use it by accident, so to speak. No wonder some of our churches are so impotent. The members of the Body are not working effectively. They are suffering paralysis. Some pastors attempt to remedy the problem by souping up their programs; but like iron lungs, many such programs are artificial support systems. What is really needed for spiritual vitality in our churches is a massive awakening of Christians to their spiritual gifts."*

*I am convinced that more than enough spiritual power to win the world in our generation is now bottled up in existing churches, but it will be released only when Christians realize that they are members of the Body and begin working at it."<sup>1</sup>*

And, we might add, when pastors realize their job is to make this happen.

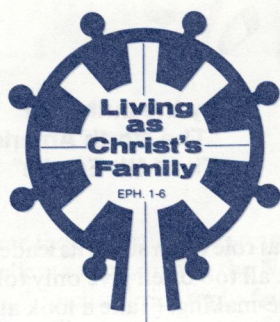
Pastors, on the whole, subscribe to these ideas. However, their practices demonstrate how little they perceive the implications. Indeed, they occasionally refer to Ephesians 4:11-12, but they continue to assume that they are the only ones who can meet the needs of the hospitalized parishoner, only they can counsel the partners in a fractured marriage, only they can pray in tones lofty enough for a Sunday morning service. And so, though lip service is occasionally given to the scriptural role of the pastor, there is little real perception of how radically different it is from most contemporary North American practices.

Indeed, it is extremely difficult for pastors to think authentically in these terms, because the role models they have observed from childhood on, the predominant emphasis in their seminary training, the orientation of the presentations at their ministerial retreats, and the continual, though often subtly expressed, expectations of their parishoners—all have served to reinforce the traditional concept that the professional pastor must do the work of the ministry.

We need to study more thoroughly the implications of the exhortation by the other Peter—the apostle: "As *each* has received a gift, *employ it for one another*, as good stewards of God's varied grace . . . in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:10-11, RSV).

<sup>1</sup>Peter Wagner, *On the Crest of the Wave*, Regal Books, 1983, pp. 53-54.





PRE-CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS  
FROM EPHESIANS

# The Church— Alive and Spirit-filled

by Arthur M. Climenhaga

*"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."  
Ephesians 5:18*

The command to tarry in Jerusalem until the enduement of power from on high proves that the one essential equipment of the church is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nothing else will avail for the real work of the church. In fact, the New Testament ideal of the church is intensely spiritual. Thus Paul declares, "Be filled with the Spirit."

In the book *Further Insights Into Holiness*, Frank Bateman Stanger writes that while the church was instituted by Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry, it was constituted by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The church was a Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered, Spirit-guided, Spirit-used body of Christian believers. It grew as the Holy Spirit was active in his operations upon both individuals and society in that day.

The New Testament doctrine of the church, Stanger continues, is centered in its spirituality. The Apostle Paul conceived of the church as a social organism in which the Holy Spirit prevails. He writes of the church as the body of Christ (Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:23; 4:12; Colossians 1:24; 2:19). He calls the church the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:23, 25; II Corinthians 11:2). Concerning admission into

the church he declares, "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (I Corinthians 12:13). In a grand final word the Apostle John reports the risen Lord as saying, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Revelation 22:17).

Stanger asserts that the objective of the church's activity is spiritual in its emphasis. What we are really saying is that a clear and decisive line can be drawn between what we might call "the church of authority" and "the church of the Spirit."

*"The church of authority" is adhered to by those who are primarily concerned with a dogmatic expression of Christianity in an institution. "The church of authority" is a visible church, characterized by stability, continuity, and legality. "The church of authority" proposes the way of conformity as the test of Christian loyalty and insists upon the acceptance of the Christian religion as a governmental scheme.*

*In contrast to "the church of authority" there has co-existed with it through all the years of Christian history another type of faith and fellowship which may be spoken of as "the church of the Spirit." The "church of the Spirit" offers a form of discipleship less easily defined because it is progressive, expanding and spiritual.*

*To "the church of the Spirit" the most precious incidents of Christian history may not be those of theological or ecclesiastical transition, but those of religious revival—the testimony of saints and seers, the experience of holy souls, the convincing evidence of the life of God in the souls of men.*

*"The church of the Spirit" has been described as an inflowing, refreshing, penetrating tide. "The church of the Spirit" in subordinating opinions to obedience and dogmatics to loyalty, makes the audacious assertion that often "the church of authority," in its institutional procedure, has been tempted to take the wrong road; making central what was incidental, setting logic before life, speculation before inspiration, the letter before the Spirit.\**

For much that is undertaken by the church, the Holy Spirit is not needed. Religious services and organized institutions do not necessarily constitute a Christian church and such may flourish without the activity of the Holy Spirit in their midst.

What happens in the life of the church when the Spirit is in it and works in it?

First of all, the church will be a Spirit-controlled church. The work of the Spirit in the church is set forth in the promises of Jesus, demonstrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and amplified in

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\*F. B. Stanger, "The Church of the Spirit," in *Further Insights Into Holiness*, edited by Kenneth Geiger.



selected sections of the New Testament letters. The Gospels record "all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven," and the Acts of the Apostles tell of all that he continued to do and to teach *after* the day in which he was taken up. This he did through the Holy Spirit who is the active, administrative agent of the glorified Son. The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, the Deputy, the Representative, the Vicar of the ascended Christ. His mission on which he was sent by the Father and Son is to glorify Christ by perpetuating Christ's character, establishing his kingdom and accomplishing his redeeming purpose in the world. The church is the body of Christ and the Spirit of Christ fills the body, directs its movements, controls its members, inspires its wisdom, supplies its strength. The Spirit guides it into the truth, sanctifies its agents and empowers, calls, distributes, controls, guides, inspires and strengthens them for witness. The work of the church is to "minister in the Spirit," to speak his message and transmit his power.

The church must also be a Spirit-staffed church. Summarizing the teachings of I Corinthians 12 relative to the various offices of the church, we note that the Lord set in the church: "First of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues" (I Corinthians 12:28). In this same chapter the Holy Spirit is credited with dispensing gifts severally as he will. The gifts are enumerated as the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, diverse tongues and interpretation of tongues.

Here are two lists, the one pertaining to offices and the other to gifts. Even though the lists are separate and distinct, there is some obvious overlapping between them. And it is evident that while the staffing of the church is the vital concern of the trinity, yet it is accomplished through the immediate ministry of the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Thus the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11-12 assume importance: "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

## What happens in the life of the church when the Spirit is in it and works in it?

We do not conclude from this that a complete formula for church organization is supplied in the New Testament. The offices mentioned both in the Acts and in the writings of Paul appear to have been arranged for as various situations arose demanding administrative solutions. Some of the developments in church administration undoubtedly had their roots in a Jewish heritage. In this light we will not suggest that the Spirit's particular blessing can be found on a congregational, presbyterian or episcopalian form of church government. Rather, from the New Testament perspective we can lay down a principle for the guidance of the church at all times; now as then, whatever the office to be filled, it is the Holy Spirit who is immediately and directly concerned.

Note with interest, therefore, that in the early organization of the church when the need arose for the selection of "members of the staff" to provide help for timid foreign widows, seven laymen were chosen to be deacons. One of the three prerequisites for the filling of the office of *deacon* was that those chosen should be "full of the Spirit" (Acts 6:3). This is an eloquent testimony to the importance of a Spirit-staffed church.

What is of major import then in the development of the contemporary church life? Whatever the administrative policy of the church or whatever the technique employed in the selection of the spiritual leader of the local church, the important consideration is that church leaders and pastors should be appointed by the Holy Spirit. Acts 13:2-3 needs to be repeated, "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

Spirit-filled pulpits is a continuing urgent need of the hour. The winning of men and women to Jesus as well as the

building up of the body of Christ is dependent on Spirit-filled pulpits. Spirit-appointed, Spirit-led pastors deliver Spirit-filled messages, work for Spirit-empowered laity who witness in the community and thereby build up a Spirit-filled church.

We further urge that if there are any other offices belonging to more modern churchly endeavor, even though not specifically mentioned in the New Testament, such offices must come within the category of the Spirit's staffing. Take, for example, the ministry of music in the life of the church. That the gospel should be sung with the Spirit and with understanding (I Corinthians 14:15) is as definitely imperative as that it should be preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and power (I Corinthians 2:4). Can we say that our church is staffed with ministers of music selected by the Spirit, or that every member of the choir is the Spirit's man or woman for that place?

The Holy Spirit is at work, ever and always at work. He is at work more markedly today through people, ordinary and extraordinary people, people just like the ones who walked across the pages of the book of Acts. Without such people, there is no church. Without the church, there is no action. Without the Spirit working through the people of the church, there is no life.

The resources then of the church are in "the supply of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit is more than a minister of consolation. He is in reality "the Christ" to the church, without the limitations of the flesh and the material world. The Spirit can reveal what Christ could not speak; he has resources of power greater than those Jesus Christ in his incarnation would use. Thus the Spirit makes possible greater works than Christ. To the church he is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of witness, the Spirit of conviction, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of life, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of promise, the Spirit of love, the Spirit of meekness, the Spirit of glory, the Spirit of prophecy.

The church is called to explore the resources of the Spirit, for the resources of the world are futile. The resources of the church—these are inadequate. A man-managed, world-annexing church can never save the world or fulfill the mission of Christ. Let the church seek the fulness of the Spirit—in the Spirit is abundance of wisdom, resources and power. ■



# Pentecost Sunday and our Wesleyan heritage

by Darius Salter

James White raises a relevant issue with the following succinct statement: "It is perplexing why modern Christians concentrate on Lent, the season of sorrow, rather than on the Easter season, the season of joy."<sup>1</sup> (The Easter season is comprised of the seven weeks between Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday). But Professor White is observant enough to realize that the average American church attender will probably be more enticed by the annual church picnic or "fill-a-pew" Sunday, than by being reminded of the following Pentecost Sunday affirmation by John Chrysostom: "Today we have arrived at the peak of all blessings, we have reached the capital of feasts, we have obtained the very fruit of our Lord's promise."

Chrysostom had plenty of biblical and theological rootage for accenting the day which crowned the work of Christ. He and his contemporaries believed that the life of Jesus had been foreshadowed by events in the Old Testament and could only be understood in the light of Hebrew salvation history. Christ had given himself as a blood sacrifice during the festive occasion which recalled the blood being sprinkled on the doors of Hebrew homes some 1,400 years before in Egypt. God then sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, fifty days after Passover, the joyous occasion of harvest and thanksgiving. Christ had been the first sheaf, but now a magnificent reaping would take place through the power of the Holy Spirit.

For centuries, Pentecost Sunday would be called Whitsunday, because of new Christians that had been reaped for the Kingdom and who appeared in white robes to be baptized. As Christ had been resurrected at Easter, the Holy Spirit would now make him the Bread of Life for hungry hearts. In other words, the Church has historically believed that without the Holy Spirit making Jesus real to individuals, the resurrection of Christ is in vain. The period between Easter and Pentecost on the Jewish calendar had been transposed

into a celebration which applied the full benefits of the resurrection to the believer. The Church militant was headed towards the Church triumphant. Without Pentecost, the Church wasn't even born, in spite of what had happened at Easter.

Without Pentecost, the Wesleyan revival would never have taken place. The fact that John Wesley retained Pentecost on his church calendar, even though he abolished many holy days, bears more than trivial significance. In his 1733 message "Scriptural Christianity," Wesley argued that Pentecost brought to the Church the ability to call Jesus, Lord; boldness renewed hope, love of God, love of brother, love of neighbor, good works, and a love for souls. But the Holy Spirit could not act in the life of the Church until Pentecost had been applied to the heart of the individual. In a 1749 letter, Wesley wrote: "The Holy Spirit is the immediate cause of all holiness in us—enlightening our understanding, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our person to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our action, purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies, to a full and eternal enjoyment of God" (*Letters* 3:9). In short, "His word ran and was glorified. It grew mightily and prevailed." Pentecost was the reason.

The Wesleyan revival continued in America, not because Wesley sent Coke and Asbury with an infallible plan or unquestionable model, but because Pentecost could be borne from one side of the Atlantic to the other. Even though the fire did not take effect until after the Revolutionary War, by 1805 the Methodists had become the largest evangelical sect within America. In retrospect, Asbury penned: "Surely, we may say our Pentecost is fully come this year when we recalled what God hath wrought." When Asbury came to America there were 600 Methodists, and when he died, there were 200,000.

One hundred years later, Ezra Squire Tipple summarized the unparalleled success of Asbury and the early circuit riders: "This presence of the Spirit is ever

the inner power of the ministry. It has been since the days of Christ upon the earth . . . . The Holy Spirit was the dependence of Asbury and his associates coming down upon them in answer to their prayers . . . . Here is the unfolding of the mystery of the Methodist Evangelism. Our gospel came not unto you in word only but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost."

Many Wesleyans, even in the 1980's, retain the significance of Pentecost Sunday, not only in doctrine but in regard to everyday Christian life. Does not Pentecost Sunday, the crowning day of the Easter season, remind us of the Church's triumphant joy? Would not celebrating the Easter season climaxed by Pentecost lead us to new meanings of Christian expression and effectiveness? Let's not overlook a means of grace, which makes Christ real to those who desire to know him in his fullness.

Allow me to give a few simple suggestions:

1. The seven Sundays of the Easter season would be a most appropriate time for individuals within the congregation to give witness to the fullness of the Spirit in their lives. Why not arrange for a specific testimony in each Sunday morning worship service?

2. Would it be possible to learn a new hymn concerning the Holy Spirit on several Sundays preceding Pentecost? The small volume by Timothy Smith entitled "The Pentecost Hymns of the Wesleys," available from the Nazarene Publishing House, would be most helpful.

3. The "seven weeks" could be a concentrated effort of prayer, fasting, and planning, climaxed by a special harvest effort of souls during the weekend of Pentecost Sunday. Water baptism of new believers would be in keeping with the churches traditional celebration of Whitsunday.

4. Above all, the Church needs to commemorate Pentecost by a worship service and sermon, which is in keeping with the occasion. *The Book of Common Prayer* provides a meaningful order of worship.

But none of the above will guarantee Pentecost in our lives and congregations. For this we must recall the formula of Jeremiah: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). ■

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*Evangelical Visitor*

<sup>1</sup>James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, pp. 52-53.



# Board for World Missions recommendations to Conference

Executive Secretary Don Zook reports that the following will be included in recommendations to the 1984 General Conference. These are presented to readers of the *Evangelical Visitor* for your information and prayer.

## London Church Planting

The Board for Missions authorized exploratory work regarding a church planting in London (UK) and assigned Jay and Judy Smith for training and research with the Ichthus Fellowship there. The dynamics at work in the lives of the Smiths, the growing relationship with the Ichthus Fellowship, the elements of change in the Brethren in Christ International Fellowship, and the interest of the Brethren in Christ Missions home constituency indicate a possible consensus toward a Brethren in Christ church planting ministry in London. A sense of direction is needed but further research and waiting upon the Lord are necessary before consummating any plans.

The Board for Missions authorized a feasibility study including possible locations for a Brethren in Christ church planting ministry in London. Bishop John Byers and Executive Secretary Don Zook plan to visit London in early May 1984 to make on-site inspection and evaluate the results of this feasibility study. They will be reporting to the June meeting of the Board for World Missions.

Pending a favorable recommendation emerging from the feasibility study, and pending ratification by the Board for World Missions, and pending personnel and funding being available, a report and recommendations from the Board for World Missions may be presented to General Conference. This will include an evaluation of the potential for church planting in spiritually destitute areas of London and possible outreach by our African brothers and sisters who now constitute the Brethren in Christ International Fellowship there. Let's be in prayer that God will give wisdom and discernment concerning Brethren in Christ ministry in London.

## Ministry of Muslims

Our Muslim world neighbors form one of the large communities of people

who are unreached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Historically, the Brethren in Christ have not focused on a mission to Muslims. There is, however, considerable awareness of this being a part of the responsibility of the Christian church in our generation. Among the Brethren in Christ there have been expressions of concern and availability for service in the Muslim world.

The International Christian Fellowship (ICF) is engaged in a creative and fruitful outreach to Muslims in Senegal, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Preliminary contacts have been made with ICF. They are in need of missionaries and speak positively of the possibility of Brethren in Christ missionaries being seconded to them.

RECOMMENDED that the Board for World Missions be authorized to negotiate with the International Christian Fellowship (ICF) regarding the possibility of Brethren in Christ Missions seconding a couple to serve in Muslim work with ICF. This is with the understanding that both the principle of seconding and the terms of seconding must be approved by the Board for World Missions before implementation. It is further understood that the recruitment and seconding of personnel will follow the general pattern and process of assignment as pertains for other Brethren in Christ missionaries.

## Formation of boards for world missions among overseas churches

There is growing interest among Brethren in Christ Churches around the world

in reaching out into new areas with the gospel. More personnel are available to be involved in church planting and cross-cultural ministries than are presently working full-time. Western missionaries face more difficulty in reaching third world peoples than missionaries from nearby countries with more similar cultures and, often, languages. There is, also, less expense involved in their ministry. North American missionaries are still needed, but they can be more effective when working in cooperation with national missionaries, as experience has already shown us. With the formation of other Brethren in Christ mission boards, increased commitment and giving to outreach ministries is envisaged among the membership of those churches.

It has been the policy of Brethren in Christ Missions to work in partnership with the churches begun by our missions program. This will continue to be our relationship with the churches. However, with this action we will move beyond that policy in the area of outreach ministries to encouraging the churches to establish their own missionary and evangelism programs with which we will cooperate as we are able. With over half the world yet to reach with the gospel, let us join together in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

RECOMMENDED that General Conference affirm in principle the formation of boards for world missions among overseas churches.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED that the Board for World Missions in cooperation with overseas church leadership be authorized to develop a policy that will be sensitive to the needs of our overseas churches to participate in staffing and financing of new church plantings and cross-cultural ministries. ■

## Biblical mothers and peace

The original Mother's Day was not an occasion for sending roses or greeting cards, but was a festival for peace. The idea of a Mother's Day was originated in 1872 by Julia Ward Howe, who called for a special time for mothers to come together to speak against war and to work for peace.

She suggested that it was up to mothers "to prevent the waste of human life of which they alone bear and know the cost."

Mother's Day could again be a day to center on peacemaking, notes John

Stoner, executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section. The mothers of Moses and Jesus could be used in a sermon on "Mothers of Refugee Children," based on Exodus 2 and Matthew 2, Stoner notes. Other topics could include "The Bows of the Mighty are Broken—Hannah, the Mother of Samuel," from I Samuel 2; "God is Our Security—Mary, the Mother of Jesus," from Luke 1:46-55; and "Peacemaker Between Nations—Ruth, the Mother of Obed," from the Book of Ruth.



# Street evangelism in London

Picture a lady on a bright Saturday morning with a shopping bag on her arm, walking into a crowded market street looking for the best bargains of the day. Suddenly, off to her right a guitarist strums a chord and seven throaty voices begin singing in unison at the top of their lungs. Turning to look, she is surprised to see a knot of young adults with lifted arms and shuffling feet singing something about how happy they are with the new life they've found . . . and that now they have victory over death.

"How odd," she thinks. "Certainly they could have picked better lyrics for a love song." Oh well, they do need food to eat, so she rummages in her bag to find a few coins to toss in their tin . . . except there is no tin.

Just as she is about to walk forward to offer her token gift, she hears the word "Jesus" and stops in her tracks. "Horror!! These kids must be Christians! Oh, how embarrassing! Really, this is too much. Don't they know religion belongs in the church? It's just not the British thing to do."

Quickly, she looks to see if anyone is watching, stuffs the coins hurriedly in her purse, straightens her dress, and browses intently at the merchandise on the nearest stall. Making her way from shop to shop, she can't seem to get away from the sound of their songs.

A voice from a PA system warns her that the group is still there when she returns. Her attention is caught by a man lying on the pavement. "Why is no one helping him?" she wonders. Then, "Oh, how cute. It's only a sketch." She fears being seen paying too much attention, so she takes sidelong glances while pretending to feverishly inspect some pears at a strategically placed fruitstand.

The man in the sketch is rescued by a punk-rocker. It dawns on her that the plot follows the story of the Good Samaritan. Memories of stories told in Sunday school years ago come to her mind. "But no," she reminds herself, "That's all right for the young kids, but it certainly has nothing to do with me." She walks away with a bag of bruised pears the fruit-seller forced her to buy.

Later that week the woman is "on all

fours" trying to vacuum under the couch when the doorbell rings. Scrambling to her feet, she rushes to the door, hoping it's the postman with a package from "mum." But to her chagrin she finds on the landing two perfect strangers, smiling. Their accents are American, but they look harmless. They mumble something about ". . . church." "Oh Lord," she thinks, "not more fanatics!" Quickly she tells them she goes to church on Christmas and Easter, and she thinks the vicar is ever so pleasant, hoping that will placate them and send them on their way.

But they don't go. Instead they start asking if she knows who Jesus is. "A quiz!" she thinks. "Oh, I'm ever so good at these." "Yes," she says, "Isn't he the chap who went around doing nice things for everyone? You know, like giving children gifts on Christmas, and parting the Red Sea?"

"No," they say, "Moses parted the Red Sea, with the help of God; but Jesus did do good things, although not necessarily just at Christmas." They ask if she has a Bible. "I certainly do, although at the moment it's propping up the piano," she replies sheepishly.

Just then a draft of frigid air blows by, promising a wet deluge. Her good, innate British hospitality responds by asking the two in for a "spot of tea."

While she plies the Americans with questions about Disneyland and that "awful man," Ronald Reagan, they keep bringing the subject around to God and how he has all the world's situations under control. It sounds absolutely ludicrous until they explain that most of the situations we like to blame on God are really problems which humans made all on their own but don't want to take responsibility for. "In fact," they go on to say, "God is continually asking for man to give up his autonomy and let

**Singing about new life during an "open air."**

*Evangelical Visitor*





Presenting the gospel through drama—a scene from the “punk-rocker” sketch.

# ndon

God have control again so that the world—and their lives—can be put back together once more in relationship with Him.”

Five cups of tea and two trips to the “loo” later, she suddenly realizes it’s time to go pick up the kids at school. The two politely excuse themselves and just before leaving, ask if they can come back again to talk to her more about this God of theirs. When they thank her for her hospitality, explaining that she was the first person in 15 to talk to them, she feels proud of herself and says, “Certainly . . . perhaps next week.”

“How strange,” she says half out loud after they’ve left. “This God of theirs is not like any God I’ve ever met.” She thinks back upon the stories she remembers from her childhood. God always seemed so distant and cold, not someone she could talk to. And didn’t they say something about praying to him before they knocked on each door, that he would open the doors for them? Goodness! Certainly that couldn’t be why she invited them in. No, of course not, it was the draft!

She takes her coat from the hook and begins putting it on. “But isn’t religion supposed to be something you do in private?” Then she suddenly remembers that eccentric group at the market on Saturday, and it dawns on her that they were singing about this same Jesus. “These Christians must really like him, to go to such extraordinary lengths.”

As she buttons up her coat and puts on her scarf, she wonders if those two will ever come back. She glances at the card they handed her. On the front is written *Jesus Action*. “Oh dear, they’re political,” she cries. But underneath is written an offer to help anyone in need. “Oh!” she sighs, “Not only are they willing to tell, but just as willing to do.” Furthermore, the address where they live is situated right in her neighborhood. Thinking of her loneliness, she



hopes—while scooting into the driving rain—that perhaps, indeed, they will come and visit her again.

The lady above is used as an illustration of various responses we have received while doing evangelism in Lewisham in southeast London. We realize this is an idealized situation, but we wanted to stress specific principles which have been found to be basic in doing friendship evangelism. These are principles that are not only useful on the “mission field,” but could well be used by North American churches in their localities.

1. “Open airs” (street evangelism including music, drama, personal testimonies, short homilies and literature distribution) are extremely important as they are obvious statements to the community that Christians are willing to come public and not worship only on Sundays behind closed doors.

2. By proclaiming God’s name on the streets, we forcefully strike against the principalities and powers which prevail and are most deeply rooted in urban settings.

3. An hour or two each week should be scheduled for door-to-door evangelism. Don’t let the weather dampen your spirits.

4. We have found that going in couples is very helpful. Initially, the fellow can talk to men and the lady to the women.

5. Before knocking on the doors, walk up the street praying for each specific home, asking God’s Spirit to go ahead of you and prepare their hearts.

6. Going door-to-door brings the good news to people in their own familiar homes, where they feel most secure and less threatened. Because of this, the person witnessing will feel all

the more vulnerable. Be encouraged though, for God has promised a harvest. He only asks for workers! (Matt. 9:37-38).

7. When introducing yourselves, explain that you are *local* Christians. People need to see that you are part of their community.

8. Questionnaires are helpful for breaking the ice and pinpointing where the person’s relationship with God is.

9. Your intent is not only to convince people of their need for forgiveness of sin, but to engender a positive friendly relationship which requires of you a lot of listening.

10. If at all possible, try to keep the conversation centered on Jesus and the Bible.

11. Don’t expect results the first visit. Remember, you’re creating a relationship which usually takes a lot of time and trust.

12. Evangelism involves not only proclaiming but demonstrating. Search for practical ways of reaching out (i.e., *Jesus Action*: offering to babysit, do grocery shopping, home repairs, etc.)

13. Leave your name, address, and phone number—preferably on a prepared piece of literature—so further contact is always possible.

14. Invite them to your church.

15. Expect many rejections. But keep at it. God has promised us a harvest. You are the answer to his prayer for laborers. Let us be those forceful men and women who are advancing the kingdom (Matt. 11:12). ■

*Jay and Judy Smith began service in London in the fall of 1983, doing church planting in cooperation with Ichthus Christian Fellowship. The Smiths are now meeting with over 20 people for worship services in their church-planting venture.*





# Postal encouragement for missionaries

by Sharon Weisser

Dear Mary,

*This morning our Sunday school teacher was encouraging us to write to missionaries. He gave out air forms with names and addresses on them and I got your name, so I have to write to you . . .*

What would you think if you got a letter like that? I hope you haven't, but I have. In fact, I received several letters similar to that while I was in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). However, I can no longer remember who sent them and I am sure, even though someone felt forced into writing, that I was still glad to get some mail. Not all writers were that blunt and some even wrote as if they enjoyed it!

Mail is important to missionaries, especially at Christmas time, birthdays, and other special holidays. Just like people in North America, they enjoy receiving mail and being reminded in a visible way that someone is thinking about and praying for them. Maybe it is even more important when their family is so far away. Some holidays are uniquely American or Canadian, such as Thanksgiving, and so could be almost forgotten except for a few nostalgic

thoughts. These holidays which are not celebrated in foreign lands are like any other day for missionaries with the classroom, hospital, or whatever taking their time—no vacation. It is nice to be remembered by people at home and know they cared enough "to send the very best" or something of equal value!

It is good to think about missionaries, to pray for them, and maybe even to dig deep into the pocket and add a little extra for a special offering for them at Christmas or their birthdays. But as good as those things are, it is better to make a direct contact with them, to show that you really care enough to take the extra time and effort to send a card or letter. It is appreciated.

Some might be thinking that they would like to encourage a missionary, but they just aren't sure how. Let me give you some ideas that will be good for missionaries, whether far away in some foreign country or close at hand at a North American mission like New York City or Quebec. (Let me add that often it is easy to forget those servants of God who don't travel to far-off places. Home missionaries need your encouragement, too.)

Here then are some suggestions, starting with the easiest or simplest.

**Cards:** Christmas, birthdays, Thanksgiving, Easter and other holidays are good times to send cards, but one need not limit it to those times. Many beautiful friendship cards can be found with uplifting and inspirational messages. They are great to send anytime to remind missionaries that they are not forgotten. These cards can be used by God to meet special needs. On holidays, cards are nice because some missionaries are isolated and may feel especially lonely and/or homesick when they remember the rest of the family getting together for special events. A personal message makes the card special. Most missionaries would feel it is such a waste of postage to send a card without even writing a personal "hi" on it. Even just a few lines are welcome, but that brings us to the next means of encouragement.

**Letters:** To the missionary, nothing is so great as a letter. But you may ask, "What does one say?" That air form can look immense—so big and empty! When writing, try to find a link or a common denominator. If you don't know the missionary personally, perhaps your link could be your church or a mutual friend. Common hometowns or similar professions also serve as good links with missionaries. Tell how you heard about or know about them if they are not personal friends. Then talk about the church, community, or whatever that connecting link is. Tell what is new and what is happening. There are always things happening at the church: conversions, marriages, babies being born, new classes. Share what is happening in the choir, boys and girls clubs, or Sunday school classes. Tell about changes in the community. People in your church are always doing something: vacations, moving, new jobs, and so on. This needs to be shared as information, not gossiping and spreading half-truths.





Be sure to write about positive events that have been meaningful to you: new people, families in the church, good sermons, Sunday school lessons, illustrations, parables, etc. Missionaries are very human and lessons that you learned can be a help to them.

Never tell half a story such as, "I'm sure you heard all about the pastor's accident, so I won't repeat that." That is only surpassed by "I'm sure you heard all about *the* accident." Don't assume they have heard or, if you think they have, don't mention it. The best way is to tell about it from your point of view. If they have heard it, your view will be slightly different. After all, remember there are *four* gospels!

Be personal—not intimate: give personal experiences that will be enjoyed for the humor or spiritual insight. Be yourself. One of the big problems many face in writing is that they don't write the same way as they talk. The best letter writers are those who write like they talk and don't try to act formal or sophisticated to impress.

Include in your letter something extra, like a humorous story, joke, riddle, anecdote, or illustration that they might be able to enjoy and even use.

Make comments about previous personal or form letters from the missionary, that show you read what they send. Tell what you like and dislike about the letter and ask questions about things you want to know more about or did not understand. This helps the missionary know what to write in reply. It is frustrating enough to realize how long it is between letters, but getting a letter from someone who makes no mention of earlier letters can cause a real communication gap. If you do mention something from a previous letter, be sure to make clear what you are referring to. The length of time makes a simple yes or no quite useless.

To make letters and cards more interesting, you can add extras. Stick a dollar bill in the envelope, or send a recent photo of your family, new home, a church event, etc. Newspaper clippings are nice if they are short and tell about something of interest to the person getting the letter. Something from the missionary's home paper or something related to his or her profession is often of interest. Bulletins of special services such as weddings and dedications are nice. Do not send stamps. Some people, wanting to be helpful, send Canadian or American stamps, but they are useless to someone overseas.

*Be personal . . . be yourself . . . The best letter writers are those who write like they talk, and don't try to impress.*

**Packages:** Last of all, it is nice to get little parcels from home, but the emphasis is on *little*. A large parcel is expensive to the missionary if he or she must pay duty on it. Little packets usually are no problem. Things to include are tapes (these can be of you talking, music of the local church, professional tapes, sermons), little toys, gum, puzzles, balloons, packets of mixes or sauces, Kool-Aid, Life Savers, and so on. Though little such things show you care. Many times, by asking family members or missionaries on furlough, you can learn what is most appreciated.

For me, a small book or paperback was always welcomed. With limited

access and funds, good reading material is not as readily available as it is here in North America.

I close with an incident from my own experience. After the guerrilla attack at Wanezi Mission, I was finding it hard to look forward to the night. It seemed my restlessness and imagination increased as it got darker. I wondered if I might be killed. A few days after the attack, I received a book in the mail that was just what I needed. It had been sent before the need, but God's timing was right. I believe that person obeyed the Lord in buying and mailing that book. It was great to know that God cared and directed someone to meet that need in my life.

As we pray for missionaries, I believe that God will direct us to do those little extras in communicating to others that we care. And he will use that effort to lift someone else. ■

*Sharon Weisser was a missionary in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) for 13 years. She now teaches at the Shalom Christian Academy in Marion, Pa.*

## PREPARATION FOR LIFE

... A life of witness  
and service



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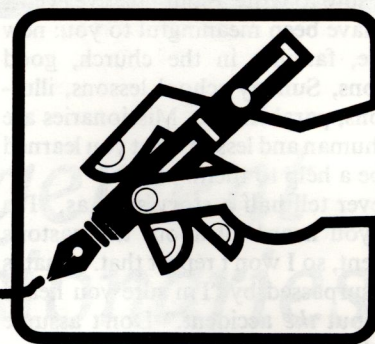
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This experience is available for any young high school graduate (single or married couple) interested in training and possible voluntary service in the future. It will begin June 4, 1984, and will be conducted at the Paxton Street Home in Harrisburg, Pa. Due to the program's intensity, it is recommended that participants are not presently dealing with a burden of personal struggles.

**CONTACT:** Paul Hensel/Brethren in Christ Missions/P.O. Box 27/Mount Joy, PA 17552



# Writing as Discipleship



by Ray M. Zercher

Why should writing be taught as a major component of our educational curricula except for the fact that it is a basic skill by which we discover and demonstrate our essential humanity? Writing enables us to objectify and to express human emotion and thought. Without it we would be less effective in communicating both with ourselves and others.

The value of the written word is emphasized by the divine inspiration and preservation of the Scriptures. Though God spoke the material world into existence, he wrote the Commandments and by his Spirit moved many

writers to record his message to man.

When we write, we join with innumerable Christians who take the gift of language as a sacred stewardship. Though few will gain fame through writing, all may prove faithful in their stewardship of the talents entrusted to them. And faithfulness is what the Master desires.

Writing holds its place as an important cultural factor in spite of technological advances which may seem to diminish the value of the written word. In fact, of our increasingly fast-paced society it might be said that clear, perceptive, and cogent writing is more important than

ever. That which is written can be read and reread, discussed and evaluated, long after the spoken word has faded away.

What you write will vary with your calling. It will emerge as an expression of who you are, where you are, what else you have done. But it can be a powerful extension of your influence, your effectiveness in the work of the Kingdom. It may be expressed in a ministry of correspondence—writing letters of encouragement and challenge to selected persons. Or you may seek a wider readership through publication, perhaps by writing expository discourse, sharing your understanding of the Scriptures or your commentary on the meanings of and means to responsible Christian living.

You might be called to writing in the imaginative mode—in fictive or poetic forms. Here you will offer your perceptions of the nature and meanings of human existence through the artistic use of imagery, rhythm or rhyme.

Or you may be inclined to garner the facts of history, providing a better understanding of the present through clearer awareness of what has been in the past. This might include writing the stories of people, of institutions, of communities, or of yourself. Dr. E. Morris Sider has made invaluable contributions through his historical writings in recent years. The editor of the *Evangelical Visitor* records the ongoing story of the Brethren in Christ Church in the pages of this periodical. But much remains to be written to enhance awareness of our denominational identity, to offer guidance for the present, and to provide vision for the future.

You may be persuaded of the importance of writing, may even know what you want to say, but wonder how to write. The fact that we study writing throughout our academic years is a commentary on the complexity of the

## Missions history to be written

A new history of Brethren in Christ Missions is soon to be written by church historian Dr. E. Morris Sider. Dr. Sider is a professor of history and English literature at Messiah College, archivist for both the college and the Brethren in Christ denomination, and a member of the new Board for Ministry and Doctrine. He has written a number of books on Brethren in Christ topics, among them *Nine Portraits* and *Messenger of Grace: A Biography of C. N. Hostetter, Jr.* He also edits a quarterly journal, *Brethren in Christ History and Life*.

Since 1871, when General Conference first created a missionary fund, the scope, methods, and strategies of Brethren in Christ Missions have greatly changed. A need has been identified to expand previous writings about missions and to include a comprehensive update of recent efforts to reach unbelievers on five continents.

The gospel message has remained the same, but Brethren in Christ

methods of ministry have altered. New emphases on partnership, indigenous leadership training, urban outreach, and wholistic ministries are major aspects of missions today. Accounts of trends over the years in missions and God's subsequent outpouring of blessings have yet to be recorded. They are stories of dedicated Christians and changed lives, of adventure as well as struggle, of answers to prayer and the birth of new churches. Dr. Sider will soon research and preserve these stories—new and old—for the brotherhood in his book.

Perhaps you can be involved in this project. Dr. Sider will be conducting interviews with those who have been connected with missions. He will be needing pertinent documents such as letters, diaries, notes, and old missions photos (particularly those prior to World War II). If you can help to supply any such information, please contact Dr. Sider at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa. 17027.



task. But it is also an affirmation of the fact that the skill can be learned.

You cannot do better than to begin where you are and to improve your writing through practice. Thinking about it, hoping to do it, wishing it were done—none of these is writing. Nothing will substitute for the actual process of matching intention with appropriate words.

Paper is patient. One of the advantages of writing, in contrast with informal speech, is the possibility of combining expression with revision prior to communication. Improvement through revision also contributes to the greater cogency of writing. Successful writers attribute their success largely to their willingness to revise. For example, James Michener, one of the most widely read authors of our day, observes that he is not really a good writer but that he may be a good rewriter.

The *how* of writing is also closely related to how much. The quality of your writing will vary in direct proportion to its quantity. The more you write, the better you will write.

If practice is a crucial factor in successful writing, regularity of practice too is an important key. Writing needs to be seen as a discipline rather than a product of compulsive inspiration. As with other aspects of Christian discipleship, writing dare not depend on the impulse of emotion. It may express emotion, but the writing itself is done in discharge of the commitment to obedient service. The sporadic writer expects too much too soon from too little. The discipleship of writing calls for regular exercise of the gift of writing, a treasure that, neglected, will tarnish and decay.

Fortunately, paper is also comparatively inexpensive. With little cost, the writer can be equipped with the essential tools and ready to go. Yet the creative combination of pen and paper can be the most rewarding activity to the serious writer. It can produce a new awareness of personal identity as well as providing a channel to effective discipleship in the edification of others.

The "serious" writer will not only regard his calling as sacred; he will also take his medium seriously. Without a fascination with words and their functions, a writer cannot hope to appeal to readers. His enthusiasm for what he has to say should be matched by an interest in his means for saying it. And one of the best ways to develop this interest is to observe how others have written. A writer will not write above the level of his reading.

*That which is written  
can be read and  
reread, discussed and  
evaluated, long after  
the spoken word has  
faded away.*

The reader of the Scriptures finds unsurpassed models for his writing style. The cadences of the King James Bible have inspired writers for generations. But the writer needs also to tune his ear to contemporary usage. He needs to meet his readers where they are by shaping his diction by current standards. Just who his readers are will also vary with his intention, but a clear and realistic awareness of audience is always crucial to efficient communication.

The complexity of the writing process may be enough to dissuade some from making the attempt. The demands of conventional grammar and punctuation may only represent a lifelong battle of

rule-conscious contention with language. But others will seize the challenge to surmount these basic requirements, moving on to rhetorical effectiveness, the true measure of writing achievement.

What is your response? If you have felt the call to write, will you put it off, hoping for a better day? Or will you respond by committing yourself to the discipline of writing? Will you excuse yourself as one who has few talents, or will you invest what you have to the glory of God?

I would encourage you not only to write but to associate with others who write. The business of writing is by nature a personal affair. But it need not be private. Your sharing with others can provide mutual encouragement and stimulation. Join—or organize—a writers' club in your community. Another means to such collegiality is by subscribing to a writers' magazine, such as *The Writer*. As in other forms of discipleship, writers need the support of others.

*Ray Zercher is a member of the Messiah College faculty, Grantham, Pa., and serves on the editorial advisory committee of the Evangelical Visitor.*

Announcing a

## Writers' Workshop

*Tuesday, July 2 - 3:30-5:00 p.m.*

*(during the General Conference workshop period)*

MESSIAH COLLEGE • GRANTHAM, PA

An introductory workshop on creative writing—surveying various literary genres, suggesting resources for the writer, and outlining how to submit manuscripts for consideration. Attention will be given to several types of writing currently sought by Brethren in Christ publications.

Workshop leaders will be E. Morris Sider and Ray Zercher, members of the Messiah College faculty. Chairing the session will be Glen Pierce, *Evangelical Visitor* editor.

### TO REGISTER:

- If you will be a registered member of General Conference, sign up for the Writers' Workshop at the Conference registration desk. There is no additional charge.
- If you will **not** be a registered member of Conference, send your name, address, phone number and \$5.00 to "Writers' Workshop," *Evangelical Visitor*, Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550. Deadline: June 15.

You are invited to suggest topics for discussion, or questions you want answered. Mail them to the address above, no later than June 1.



# "The Cost of Conscience": a two-act play to be presented at General Conference

Which is worse?

To do the right thing for the wrong reasons?

Or to do the wrong thing for the right reasons?

"The Cost of Conscience" is a two-act church drama about a Brethren in Christ family struggling to find the answers and to cope with the consequences of their decisions. The setting is rural America during the 1960's—at the height of the Vietnam War, which was responsible for explosive feelings throughout our country and certainly within many church families. The focus of the drama is the conflict between family members and their reaction to disagreement and crisis.

On Sunday evening, July 1, 1984, "The Cost of Conscience" will be presented at General Conference at Messiah College. The purpose is to demonstrate the use of drama as one tool of ministry in the local congregation. This production utilizes five characters, a simple setting, and clothes and props consistent with that time period. It is clearly adaptable to fit within a church service framework.

I believe Scriptures reveal that Jesus was the Master Playwright, who gave us not only dramatic writings but also a way of life. While on earth he acted out many customs and beliefs that are still held today. For example, he not only described but also demonstrated the present-day concepts of communion and footwashing. He taught us that we are not only to think about an experience, but also to feel the impact of our actions to anchor the meaning for an extended period of time.

While "The Cost of Conscience" initially allows us to hear a debate on the church issues of participation in war, we then experience the intense feelings expressed by family members defending their emotional positions.

"The Cost of Conscience" was written

by Dr. Woody Wendling, a member of the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church, over the past year with the assistance of a number of persons who critiqued the

## DramaFest '84



by Darrel  
Brubaker

She literally surges into the audience. Full of energy and excitement, she moves confidently to first one person, then another. She talks to one, jokes with a second, taps yet a third on the shoulder. "Follow me," she commands. And he does! Her voice compels respect.

"Is this the same shy young woman we met last year? The one who could never speak in front of people. You do remember her, Darrel, don't you? Don't you?"

I think I do—from our first drama meeting—yet I marvel at the transformation. The Lord has been healing her, slowly, faithfully, for months now. There are many reasons for that, yet drama has been a part . . . just a part . . . but for me that is enough. "She's found her niche," I shared recently with a mutual friend. And so she has.

You see, drama is a powerful and effective tool to reach people, and not just those in the audience. Drama touches most deeply those who are most intimately involved. Its touch—when empowered by the Spirit of the living Christ—can bring life and healing.

Of course, drama does not always work in that way . . . but Christian drama does. And drama does not always bring people together . . . but Christian drama does. Yet, drama does not always build the church of Jesus Christ . . . but Christian drama does. Ah, but drama does not . . . well, I think you understand.

drama. However, the initial skeleton for the drama was given flesh by spontaneously acting out each scene using psychodramatic techniques, with a tape recorder capturing the emerging "script." This unique approach resulted in a realistic, dynamic drama filled with raw emotional impact because the characters were created by people tapping into their own real-life experiences. The original characters were portrayed by Darrel and Sheri Brubaker and Frank and Diane Fimiano. If the message of this drama is only half as powerful as the effect on the individuals originally involved in the roles, we are all going to be entertained, challenged, and moved. —Frank Fimiano, Chairman, Board of Christian Education.

God not only can use drama in the church, he is using it. Today, this week, next month, this summer!

This summer? Yes, at General Conference. It's called DramaFest '84, and *you are invited*. During the Conference week, churches from across the brotherhood will be performing a variety of plays in the Climenhaga Fine Arts Center. From July 2-4 (Monday-Wednesday), plays will be presented during the afternoon and evening. On Thursday, July 5, performances are scheduled for the morning.

Look for an original script (written especially for the DramaFest) from Pennsylvania, and a serious drama from Canada. Over a dozen churches plan to participate, and the excitement is growing!

Schedules detailing performance times of the participating churches will be available at General Conference. Please check it against your personal schedule. When you have free time, plan to come over to Miller Auditorium in the Fine Arts Center. And "share the excitement" of DramaFest '84!

The Board of Christian Education is sponsoring DramaFest '84 as a means of encouraging individuals and churches across the brotherhood to explore the use of Christian drama. ■

Darrel Brubaker, who is directing DramaFest '84, is completing seminary studies at Eastern Baptist Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa.

Evangelical Visitor





# Beautiful, holy ground

by Ernest A. Giles

Stars winked through the spruce boughs. The campfire had faded to glowing embers. Talking quieted, and in twos and threes the boys left the log circle to slide into their sleeping bags. It was then I noticed a lone figure silhouetted against the fire's glow, slouched on the log, clutching his sleeping bag against his face. I sat down beside him, and with a hand on his shoulder, asked quietly, "Do you have some heavy thoughts, little buddy?"

He just kept his eyes on the fire, and his words tumbled out frantically, "I just

can't figure it out! I feel rotten! I don't know what's wrong with me! I feel rotten!"

Then he looked up at my face, and I realized it was Kerry. I had begun to enjoy this twelve-year-old. We had really hit it off in snorkeling, an elective that I was working with this summer. Kerry was like a seal, diving deeper and swifter than any of us. He gloried in discovering the wary bass around the old sunken pier, the clam beds and the green branches of freshwater sponge. Even down eight feet under the surface, you

could see his eyes sparkle with delight through his face mask. Now they were flooded with tears.

"Do you feel sick?" I queried, hoping to narrow his problem.

"Naw, it's nothing like that."

"Was it something about our discussion with Pastor Dan tonight?" Dan had been talking about Jesus' return and judgment.

"Yeah, I figured I had it all together, but I don't! I'm not ready for what Pastor Dan was giving us." Kerry sounded deeply troubled, yet sincere.

As I questioned further, he told me that he was a Christian, but he thought that he was a complete failure as a wit-

## A camp counselor's testimony

by Kim Hykes

As a counselor at the Christian Retreat Center, I saw many lives change, including my own. At the age of 21 I may be considered an adult by the world, but as a Christian I'm still very much a child. CRC helped me do more growing up in just two weeks than I did in the previous six years of my Christian life. I've never seen God's love more evident than I did at that camp. I usually don't make friends quickly, but I grew as close to the people at camp in just a week's time as I have to people I've known for years.

My most memorable and meaningful experiences at camp were the one-on-one sharing times with my campers. I was amazed by the way those kids would open up to me and share problems that they were facing, ones they never shared with anyone else. They may have known me for only 48 hours, but they felt they could confide in me. That gave me a special feeling because I'm not used to having people open up to me and share their personal problems. I wasn't sure I could handle it, but as

*Kim Hykes attends the Hollowell (Pa.) congregation. The Christian Retreat Center is a ministry of the Allegheny Regional Conference.*

I opened my mouth to speak, God's words flowed through. Young people who had come to me crying would walk away happy in the Lord, looking as if a huge load had been lifted off their shoulders.

I also saw other evidence of God's love at work. Some kids came to camp dealing with problems of anger, selfishness, jealousy, unforgiveness, and left as loving persons willing to forgive others. Others were victims of child abuse or didn't know what it meant to be loved. We saw them leave knowing that there were seven counselors who loved and respected them for what they were, but more importantly, carrying with them the love of God which no one could ever take away from them. Some of these campers wrote to me after camp to tell me that their growing didn't stop, but that God is still playing a big part in their lives. These letters are especially meaningful to me.

I can't say enough good things about CRC and the things I witnessed there. But I know that there wasn't one person who walked out of that camp without having his or her life changed in some way. For me, CRC was a good place to grow in my Christian life.



# SUMMER CAMPING SCHEDULE

## CAMP KAHQUAH, R. R. 1, Magneta- wan, Ontario P0A 1P0

June 30-July 6—Junior Girls Camp  
July 7-13—Senior Girls Camp  
July 14-20—Junior Boys Camp  
July 21-27—Senior Boys Camp  
July 28-August 7—Family Camp

## MILE HIGH PINES, Angelus Oaks, CA 92305

June 17-23—High School  
(Grades 9-12)  
July 22-28—Junior Camp  
(Grades 4-6)  
July 29-August 4—Junior High  
(Grades 7 & 8)

## CHRISTIAN RETREAT CENTER, R. 1, Box 13-A, E. Waterford, PA 17021

June 15-17—Backpack Trip  
June 17-22—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 15-17)  
June 24-29—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 8-11)  
July 3-8—Family Camp  
July 8-13—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 8-11)  
July 15-20—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 8-11)  
July 22-27—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 12-14)  
July 29-Aug. 3—Pioneer Camp  
(Ages 12-14)

(Note: The three Pioneer Camps for  
ages 8-11 are alike, as are the two  
camps for ages 12-14.)

## KENBROOK BIBLE CAMP, 501 Pine Meadow Dr., Lebanon, PA 17042

June 17-23—Intermediate Boys  
Camp (Ages 10, 11)  
June 24-30—Intermediate Girls  
Camp (Ages 10, 11)  
July 1-7—Junior Boys Camp  
(Ages 8, 9)  
July 8-14—Junior Girls Camp  
(Ages 8, 9)  
July 15-22—Family Camp  
July 22-28—Teen Camp  
(Ages 14-16)  
July 29-Aug. 4—Junior High Camp  
(Ages 12, 13)

## CAMP LAKEVIEW, Goodrich, MI 48438

July 30-Aug. 4—Junior Camp  
(Ages 9-12)  
Aug. 4-9—Teen Camp

ness at school. His behavior was obviously un-Christian. As we began to work out some practical solutions, Pastor Dan joined us at the fireside to add his counsel. I had other responsibilities, so I left them in heart-to-heart talk about Christian living. I am grateful that Camp Kahquah provides such a meeting place for myself and "Dans" and "Kerrys." It becomes holy ground, because God is there in a special way.

Another very different but special boy joined us in this meeting place a few years ago. He stepped off the bus, a slender awkward child in a dull brown suit clutching a black and white stuffed penguin to his chest. A penguin itself could not have created more curiosity. The boy could recite the natural history of penguins, talk like a penguin and, maybe, think like a penguin. He was obviously a highly intelligent lad, but on a penguin warp.

In the devotional times Uncle Ivan, his counsellor, learned that his parents were professing agnostics, and that he himself did not believe in God. We began to pray earnestly for our young friend. The encouragement came soon when he enquired if there would be penguins in heaven. I assured him that if God were going to create a whole new heaven and earth, there would be the very best habitat that penguins could desire, a penguin heaven too! (I added a new dimension to my own theology that day.) Although his spiritual interests increased throughout the camp, I don't know if he was saved during that time. Our loving prayers have gone with you, "penguin boy."

The counsellors and I could tell of others from the girls' camps too. Sometimes whole families have been saved through girls returning home, burdened to work for Jesus. These examples mentioned, however, are representative of the work being done at camp. Summer camping is truly an important sector of church life, functioning as a Bible school and a mission. As in Kerry's case, he needed to learn the biblical concept that our behavior today has many consequences in the light of Jesus' return. Through many avenues—devotions, spiritual songs (some as catchy as "Bullfrogs and Butterflies"), Bible lessons, Scripture memorization, one-to-one activity and modelling—children learn Christian living day after day. Camping as a method is uniquely effective.

As in the "penguin boy's" case, we had to start as missionaries with the simple gospel. Some of the children come on



the invitation of another child, others through a social service sponsorship. However they have come, many of our Brethren in Christ adults today testify that they were saved at camp. Camping truly is missionary work.

Camp Kahquah is certainly "away off in the bush in the summertime" but we need you to think of camp as "right here all year around" in your prayer and active interest. The camping committee, with the Board of Christian Education, welcomes participation in this satisfying work. Let me suggest a few ways:

1. We need camp nurses, staff workers, counsellors and pastors.
2. We need materials such as canoes, back-packing equipment, snorkeling equipment and tents.
3. Willing hands are needed on the spring workday to prepare the grounds and buildings for summer.
4. We need child sponsors.
5. Take up a specific camp, camp worker, or child as a prayer project. We need you to pray for a specific camp, camp worker or child.
6. We want you to take an active, intelligent interest in the plans and projects of the Camp Kahquah organizations.

Is life getting dull? Are you looking for someone to laugh or cry with? Come to Camp Kahquah! It's beautiful, holy ground.

*Ernest Giles is director of children's camps at Camp Kahquah, a ministry of the Canadian Conference located on Ahmic Lake, about 160 miles north of Toronto.*



# church news

## Allegheny Conference

The **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa., observed Christ's Crusaders' Day on Sunday, Feb. 26. Dinner was served to the young people after they took complete charge of both the worship and Sunday school services. • A consecration service was held recently for deacons, reports the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa.

Rev. Marshall and Eleanor Poe were the guest speakers for the missions conference held by the **Chambersburg**, Pa., congregation on Feb. 18 and 19. • Home and family was the topic Rev. Frank Kipe used for the Sweetheart Banquet held by the **Clear Creek** congregation, Everett, Pa.

On March 11-14 revival services were held by the **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation. Dr. Luke Keefer Jr. was the evangelist. • Revival services were held Feb. 26-Mar. 4 by the **Green Spring** congregation, Newville, Pa. Rev. Earl Lehman was the evangelist.

"Sow the Seed" was the theme for the missions day held by the **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., congregation on Sunday, March 4. Louis Cober was the guest speaker. Five VSers were guests for the evening service. • The **Montgomery** congregation, Mercersburg, Pa., reports holding deeper life services on March 4-11. Rev. Bob Votary, Sydenham, Ont., was the guest speaker.

## Atlantic Conference

A seven-week course in basic evangelism was held by the **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fl. The pastor, Gary Eldred, and his wife, Sherry, led the class. • The **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., held an installation service for Paul and Esther Snyder on Sunday, Mar. 18. Rev. Snyder will be in charge of pastoral care and evangelism.

Five persons were recently received into membership by the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation on Sunday, March 18. • The **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation observed Annual Fireman's Sunday on March 11. The local firemen served breakfast at the firehouse, and then attended the morning worship service.

Eber and Ruth Dourte were the speakers for the spiritual life emphasis week held by the **Souderton**, Pa., congregation on Feb. 19-26. "Learning Love Skills" was the theme for the week. • A

dinner honoring all Christian education workers of the **Speedwell Heights**, Lititz, Pa., congregation was held recently. Eugene Wingert was the resource guide and lead in some group activities.

## Canadian Conference

The **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont., accepted two persons into fellowship recently. • A three-day Bible conference was held by the **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont. Dr. Luke Keefer Jr. was the speaker and talked about the Holy Spirit.

The **Wainfleet**, Ont., congregation held a marriage enrichment seminar in March. Rev. and Mrs. Jay Selden were the resource couple.

## Central Conference

The Missions Prayer Fellowship of the **Beulah Chapel** congregation, Springfield, Oh., observed Missions Sunday, March 11, with a carry-in meal following the morning worship. Each family was asked to prepare an international dish from a country where there are Brethren in Christ people serving.

Recent guests of the **Pleasant Hill**, Oh., congregation were missionaries Allen and Leoda Buckwalter and Winnie Thuma. • Renewal meetings were held by the **Rolling Acres** congregation, McMinnville, Tn., on March 11-18. Rev. Dennis Deweese was the evangelist.

The **Western Hills** congregation, Cincinnati, Oh., reports holding a consecration service for their deacon, Roman Slabaugh. Bishop David Climenhaga was present for the service.

## Midwest Conference

The Men's Fellowship and the Missionary Prayer Fellowship of the **Abilene**, Ks., congregation held a joint service on Sunday evening, March 4. A slide presentation of Voluntary Service was presented by Sam Minter. • Ten persons from the **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Ok., were baptized and welcomed into fellowship recently.

The 4th, 5th and 6th Grade Sunday School Class of the **Oklahoma City**, Ok., congregation reached its goal of \$300.00 to build a home for a displaced family. Judy Shaw is their teacher. • Neighbor Night was observed by the **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks., on Friday, March 9. The

Innermissions Quartet gave a musical concert following a fellowship meal.

## Pacific Conference

Missions Day was observed by the **Labish** congregation, Salem, Or., on Sunday, March 11. A representative from Teen Mission shared in the morning. In the evening there was a puppet skit and a slide-tape story by Ray and Winnie Hock.

Linda Hughes, member of the **Upland**, Ca., Church recently shared with her congregation. She is under appointment to West Africa with Wycliffe Translators.

## For The Record...

### Births

**Besecker:** Erica Lynn, Feb. 19; Kirk and Patti Besecker, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

**Brown:** Emily Elizabeth, Jan. 20; Allen and Elizabeth Brown, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Byers:** Cynthia Ann, Feb. 13; Randy and Penny Byers, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

**Decker:** Erin Elizabeth, Jan. 29; Randall and Dot Decker, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Diehl:** Hannah Elizabeth, Feb. 5; John and Ruth Diehl, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**England:** Lisa Renee, Feb. 10; Nelson and Judy (Christopher) England, Clarence Center congregation, NY

**Frias:** Jonathan Henry, Feb. 19; Javier and Roxanne (Hess) Frias, Refton congregation, Pa.

**Helfrick:** Daniel Robert, Feb. 25; Rodney and Mary Helfrick, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

**Lamens:** Zane Tyler, Feb. 17; Jeff and Elaine Lamens, Martinsburg congregation, Pa.

**Lindsay:** Jesse Aaron, Feb. 20; Allen and Diana Lindsay, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

**Myers:** Brandon Louis, Jan. 12; Guy and Beverly (Martin) Myers, Clarence Center congregation, NY

**Poe:** Ryan Timothy, Feb. 12; Tim and Mary Jane Poe, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Rogers:** Cheri Renee, Jan. 15; Mike and Trish Rogers, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

**Sider:** Meghan Jennifer, Feb. 27; Glen and Margaret Sider, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

**Smith:** Jared Sean, Jan. 14; Michael and Lolly Smith, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Wengert:** Alison Leigh, Feb. 20; Donald and Donna Wengert, Air Hill congregation, Pa.

### Weddings

**Beaty-Nash:** Georgia Nash, Canton, Oh., and Donald Beaty, Akron, Oh., Dec. 30, 1983, in the Amherst Community Church.

**Fisher-Reed:** Douglas Fisher and Karen Reed, Dec. 3, 1983, in the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Sam Hollingsworth officiating.

### VOLUNTARY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

*A service-minded couple who love people needed at the Upland Manor Annex as of August 1. The Annex is a residential care unit for up to six persons. Responsibilities include boarding care for ambulatory persons. No nursing training needed. Short term service can be considered.*

*For information, write to the administrator, Upland Manor, 1125 W. Arrow Hwy., Apt. 14, Upland CA 91786 or phone (714) 985-1215.*

*Third Annual  
Heritage Service  
June 3, 1984  
3:00 p.m.  
Historic Ringgold  
Meeting House*

*Ringgold, Maryland*



**Hockenberry-McNemar:** Wendy Jo, daughter of Mrs. William Stouffer and Mr. Franklin McNemar, and David, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hockenberry, Feb. 25, in the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Eugene Heidler officiating.

**Holland-Jackson:** Sherry, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, Cincinnati, Oh., and Mike, son of Rev. and Mrs. Fred Holland, Englewood, Oh., and Zimbabwe, Dec. 28, in the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church with father of the groom and Rev. Henry N. Miller officiating.

## Obituaries

**Hickle:** Ernest P. Hickle, Colorado Springs, Co., born April 12, 1899, in Kiowa, Ks., died Feb. 15, 1984. He was married to Grace Hickle who survives. Also surviving are a sister, Sadie Burns; eight nieces; and three nephews. He was a member of the Mt. View Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Garland Whittington conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Evergreen Cemetery.

**Leonard:** Elmer Leonard, Mifflintown, Pa., born June 8, 1917, died Feb. 20, 1984, in the

Lewistown Hospital. He was the son of Grace Gill Leonard and the late Thomas Leonard. In addition to his mother, he is survived by five children: Thomas, Ray, Madge Hopewell, Elsie Reigle, and Linda Smith; a brother; two sisters; twelve grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Rev. M. Eugene Heidler and Rev. Kenneth R. Hepner conducted the funeral service. Interment was in Adams Cemetery.

**Mitchell:** John Alfred Mitchell, born Nov. 1, 1910, in Washington, Pa., died Feb. 25, 1984, in Oak Park, Il. His wife, Alice, preceded him in death three years ago. He was a member of the Nappanee Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Jay E. Sisco conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Union Center Cemetery.

**Pittman:** Nora E. Pittman, Everett, Pa., born Nov. 3, 1913, died Feb. 9, 1984, in Bedford Co. Memorial Hospital. She is survived by four brothers and five sisters. A sister and a brother preceded her in death. She was a member of the Clear Creek Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Curtis E. Bryant conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Cherry Lane Cemetery.

**Rosenberger:** Mable L. Rosenberger, Souderton, Pa., born July 5, 1909, in West Rockhill Twp., died Nov. 29, 1983, in Grand View Hospital, Sellersville, Pa. She is survived by her husband, Earl C. Rosenberger; a son, Lyle L.; two sisters: Martha Stieger and Alice L. Kulp; and three granddaughters. She was a member of the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church.

**Seeber:** Elwood Seeber, died Oct. 25, 1983, at the age of 67. He was married to Grace Augustine Seeber who preceded him in death. He is survived by a brother, Maxwell. He was a member of the Port Colborne Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Arthur Heise conducted the funeral service.

**Simmons:** William Simmons, Rock Island, Tn., died Feb. 18, 1984, at the age of 43. He is survived by his wife, Mildred; his mother, Mrs. Polly Simmons; a daughter, Jennifer; a son, Christopher; maternal grandmother; a brother; and three sisters. Rev. Atlee Hershberger conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the White Hill Cemetery.

**Starr:** Ida M. Starr, Snover, Mi., born Feb. 8, 1901, died Nov. 29, 1983. She was married to Clinton Starr who preceded her in death. She is survived by two daughters: Phyllis Miller and Marion Sisco; four sons: Randall, Raymond, Harold and John; 15 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and a sister, Pearl Starr. She was a member of the Mooretown Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Ronald Slabaugh and Rev. Melvin Stauffer conducted the funeral service.

**Thomas:** Sarah M. Thomas, Sandusky, Mi., born Sept. 16, 1885, died Feb. 9, 1984. She was married to Lewis Thomas who preceded her in death. She is survived by a son, Rev. Erwin; a daughter, Mrs. Randall Starr; 12 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and a sister, Cornelia Willer. A daughter, Irene Gerstenberger, preceded her in death. She was a member of the Mooretown Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Ronald Slabaugh and Rev. Melvin Stauffer.

**Woy:** Ora M. Woy, Everette, Pa., born Feb. 20, 1895, died Feb. 28, 1984, in Bedford Co. Memorial Hospital. She was the last surviving member of a family of thirteen brothers and sisters. Rev. Curtis E. Bryant conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Asbury Methodist Church Cemetery.

## stewardship

### Progress Report— Cooperative Ministries and Mission

#### First Quarter 1984

Unrestricted contributions	\$227,589.38*
Designated contributions	18,109.64
Reported direct contributions	60,510.43
Total to April 1, 1984	\$306,209.45
1984 Requests from General Conference Ministries	\$3,660,691.00
1983 Contributions to General Conference Ministries	\$2,683,332.00

\*NOTE: All dollars are stated in U.S. amounts only.

### Principles from Proverbs #5

*"The man who knows right from wrong and has good judgment and common sense is happier than the man who is immensely rich!" (Proverbs 3:13, Living Bible).*

Knowing right from wrong, good judgment, common sense—Proverbs sums these up in the word "wisdom," a quality beyond compare, which brings a long, good life of riches, honor, pleasure and peace.

Not only do these virtues bring a sense of happiness that surpasses that of being wealthy, they are also cardinal qualities of a good steward. They are as essential to a life of good stewardship as is the knowledge gained in the first eight years of elementary education. Applying these principles to academic, moral, spiritual, and ethical issues early in life helps most persons move up the ladder of efficient and effective living in a manner that will be natural, and will open doors of opportunity.

Best of all, knowing right from wrong, good judgment, and common sense are within the reach of almost anyone aspiring to lay hold of them. They are not bought with money. They are not reserved for intellectual giants. The elite of society cannot reserve these qualities for themselves. But it does take effort to acquire and practice them. Careful evaluation, prayerful consideration, and disciplined pursuit are required if these virtues are to be acquired, and made applicable to the issues in life.

When there is a regular practice of doing the right, refusing the wrong, and measuring decisions by the principles of good judgment and common sense, wise stewardship will be a growing experience, approved of God and acceptable to our contemporaries. There will also be an enlarging personal satisfaction and enrichment in our own lives.

Henry N. Hostetter  
Eastern Field Representative  
Commission on Stewardship & Finance





# Religious freedom in Nicaragua

reported by Roy V. Sider

*The following report grows out of a consultation by Roy V. Sider, Secretary of Overseas Ministries of Brethren in Christ Missions, with Rev. Enrique Palacios of Managua, Nicaragua on March 16, 1984. This was the occasion of Sider's sixth consecutive annual visit to the country. Rev. Palacios is completing his fifth year term as Executive Minister of the Brethren in Christ Church of Nicaragua. The Brethren in Christ Church has grown from 24 churches in 1979 with 379 members to 45 churches with 1,182 members in 1983. Rev. Palacios was ordained in 1974 and is a respected Christian leader throughout the country.*

The huge billboard beside the main highway to Managua proclaims, "We preach Jesus Christ and His coming." Every coin minted since the present government came to power bears the inscription, "*En Dios Confiamos*" (In God We Trust). To learn more of the state of religious liberty among the evangelical churches of Nicaragua, I interviewed the Rev. Enrique Palacios. He serves as Executive Minister of the Brethren in Christ Church and its 45 congregations throughout the country. The following summarizations are from statements made by Rev. Palacios in the course of the interview and subsequently reviewed by him.

To the best of our knowledge, pastors have complete freedom in preaching the gospel as they understand it. There is no hindrance from the government to the work of the church. Rev. Palacios is able to visit the churches throughout the country. He stated, "I have just returned from the area of the northern border. Even though there was a heavy military presence in the area, there were no restrictions. I was respected as a religious person."

There are no restrictions on inviting people to the services of the church. Moreover, there are abundant opportunities for proclamation of the gospel throughout the nation. Billboards carry the message as do advertisements in the newspapers. Scripture verses are displayed on some of the buses seen on the streets of the capital. In response to a question about restrictions to the distribution of Bibles and Christian litera-

ture, Palacios replied, "No, no, no, the only limitations are dollars to bring literature into the country."

Two radio stations are operated for the disseminations of religion—one is Roman Catholic and the other, Protestant. Since January 1984, all programming must be approved by the Ministry of Communication but, at least on the Protestant station, there have been no cuts in the programming. Religious broadcasters are not allowed to back any particular candidate for the national elections. The Sandinista party also carries religious broadcasts on its radio station. Palacios observed that while religion is not taught in the schools, neither is he aware of an effort to deny God.

The opening of new churches is encouraged by the government. They provide free church sites in new housing areas. Additional sites may be purchased at market prices. The most recent Brethren in Christ Church in Managua was provided a lot without so much as a payment for the deed. In response to a question regarding opposition to beginning new congregations, Palacios replied, "I could open 1,000 if I had the pastors!"

There have been conflicts to resolve. A pastor was in prison, charged with being a counterrevolutionary. When, after four months, it was established that the charge was falsely made, the pastor was released. In another instance, one church building was seized and damaged by a local group. The central authorities asked forgiveness, made repairs and demanded restoration to the church of the furniture which was stolen.

A very positive note is sounded due to government agencies' cooperation with many church-sponsored development projects—e.g., electricity, water supply, education.

The question of registration for military service brought to clear focus the question of civil rights for the minority of Christians who conscientiously oppose participation in warfare. The Mennonites and Brethren in Christ, both historic peace churches, appealed to the government through CEPAD (a cooperative service organization for the evangelical churches of Nicaragua). When the appeal appeared to be favorably received, another group asked for exemption for political reasons. The govern-

ment resolved the dilemma by omitting any exemptions in the law, but administratively provided for religious conscientious objectors to war. Instructions were given to draft boards to especially exempt Mennonites and Brethren in Christ. This has de facto been extended to similar Protestant groups. Recently nine Brethren in Christ youth were called for military service. The church identified them as members and they were exempted. CEPAD officials have been very helpful and the government is cooperative. ■

## The God of Changed Lives

### CHANGE IN MY LIFE

#### MAY

Day	Book & Chapter
<i>My God abundantly provides every need</i>	
S <input type="checkbox"/>	6 Ex. 16:1-12
M <input type="checkbox"/>	7 Deut. 32:8-14
T <input type="checkbox"/>	8 Psalm 145:13-21
W <input type="checkbox"/>	9 Isaiah 41:17-20
T <input type="checkbox"/>	10 Isaiah 66:10-16
F <input type="checkbox"/>	11 Joel 2:18-27
S <input type="checkbox"/>	12 Philippians 4:10-20

#### Therefore, I experience:

Thankful heart	S <input type="checkbox"/>	13 Psalm 107:1-9
	M <input type="checkbox"/>	14 Psalm 116:12-19
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	15 Luke 17:11-19
	W <input type="checkbox"/>	16 2 Cor. 9:6-15
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	17 Philippians 1:3-11
Patience	F <input type="checkbox"/>	18 Colossians 2:1-7
	S <input type="checkbox"/>	19 1 Timothy 4:1-8
	S <input type="checkbox"/>	20 Psalm 34:1-10
	M <input type="checkbox"/>	21 Psalm 40:1-5
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	22 Lam. 3:22-33
Trust	W <input type="checkbox"/>	23 Philippians 4:4-7;14-19
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	24 Colossians 1:9-14
	F <input type="checkbox"/>	25 James 1:1-11
	S <input type="checkbox"/>	26 James 5:7-12;17-20
	S <input type="checkbox"/>	27 Gen. 6:13-7:12
	M <input type="checkbox"/>	28 Gen. 24:1-27
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	29 1 Kings 17:8-16
	W <input type="checkbox"/>	30 Psalm 28
	T <input type="checkbox"/>	31 Psalm 33:12-22

#### JUNE

Day	Book & Chapter
F <input type="checkbox"/>	1 Prov. 3:1-10
S <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Matthew 6:25-34
<i>My God is always with me</i>	
S <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Ex. 13:17-22
M <input type="checkbox"/>	4 Psalm 24:1-6
T <input type="checkbox"/>	5 Psalm 139
W <input type="checkbox"/>	6 Isaiah 55:1-9
T <input type="checkbox"/>	7 Isaiah 57:14-19
F <input type="checkbox"/>	8 Ezekiel 37:24-28
S <input type="checkbox"/>	9 1 Cor. 3:16-23

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## Zimbabwean churches concerned about hunger in southern Matabeleland

AKRON, Pa.—On February 3 the Zimbabwean government imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on villagers living in southern Matabeleland, a province in southern Zimbabwe. The government also halted all food shipments to the curfew region and shut down all stores in an effort to clean out armed dissidents.

Zimbabwe is suffering the third year of severe drought. Church workers report that the 450,000 residents in the region are very hungry and most have little access to food other than dried grass or unripened melons.

Nancy Heisey, Mennonite Central Committee co-secretary for Africa who recently returned from Zimbabwe, reports that residents in the area are

totally dependent on outside food shipments because of prolonged drought. In the past two years the peasant families were able to survive on surplus grains from the 1981 harvest, but this year there is no extra grain.

Heisey describes the reasons for the curfew and its effect on local villagers: "It looks like there are two sides to the story. The Zimbabwean government is dealing with serious security problems and has responded by sealing off the area and rounding up dissidents who are challenging government control. But the curfew and military activities in the southern Matabeleland region have brought suffering for residents. One expatriate doctor I talked to in the cur-

few region had treated villagers who have been brutally beaten by military personnel."

Early last year the Zimbabwean government held an army campaign in northern Matabeleland during which more than 2,000 civilians were reported killed. So far that level of violence in the new curfew area has not been reported.

Since mid-March it appears that the Zimbabwean government has softened its military policy in southern Matabeleland. An MCC worker reported from the curfew area: "The curfew seems to be relaxing. Some stores are being allowed to open two times a week. Most of the military activity has shifted to the Wanezi area (east of the curfew area.)"

According to Heisey, "Some of the most severe food needs are found right in the middle of the curfew area." The Brethren in Christ church work is concentrated there.

Church leaders, including some from

## Onesimus

*Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you . . . will tell you everything that is happening here.*

*Colossians 4:9*

Dear Paul:

There's an emphasis being placed on church renewal which is gaining momentum and attention among the believers here. They are right on target, for many churches are experiencing apathy, program-weariness, and lukewarmness. (Actually, it borders on coldness.) There's a call to return to the style of the New Testament church—a church that everyone seems to portray as a church living a quality and style of life that was absolutely exciting!

Recently I visited a body of believers and they were alive! They sat together and talked of needy people in the community and immediately made plans to meet those needs. Within their own group there were those who were hurting and they made plans to minister to them, also. The worship service had an air of celebration as they sang and prayed together. As I sat among them, I remembered the words you wrote to the church at Thessalonica: "We are bound to thank God always for you because your faith grows exceedingly and the love of everyone of you all towards each other abounds." I said to myself: "Aha, I have found a church after the pattern of the early church."

Later, I visited another body of believers and their pattern of worship was

different. It was evident that they believed in the priesthood of all believers. They sang and prayed together and periodically someone stood to exhort the group from Scripture. (He had the gift of exhortation). Others shared of experiences they had throughout the week. (They had the gift of ministry.) This continued for some time—different people using their gifts of leadership throughout the service. The pastor kept a low profile; he didn't sit up front. Then, I remembered you wrote to the church at Rome about the body of Christ having many members and the members having gifts. The body is to be edified with these gifts, and I thought, "Aha, now I *have* found a church patterned after the early church."

But, Paul, wouldn't you know, I went to a third church. They sang and prayed all right and the minister preached Christ with vigor. But it was soon evident that there were disagreements within the body, even divisions. I groaned. I remembered that you wrote to the Corinthian Church (after you told them they were called to be saints) that it was told to you there were contentions and divisions among them. I groaned again. This third church, too, sounds like one of the New Testament churches! Now tell me, Paul, which of these three

churches is truly patterned after the New Testament church?

I have thought on this question a long time. From my viewpoint, if church renewal is to come, rather than following the New Testament organizational structures or ritualistic patterns, we must pattern after the *principles* of the New Testament church. These centered in Jesus Christ as their Head and the Holy Spirit as their source of power. The people were dedicated to being together, to ministering to each other, to unity and solidarity. They were committed to one task, that of preaching Christ to the world. And they were filled with joy. These principles are the key to a strong, alive, Christ-centered, spontaneously serving and witnessing church.

Surely the churches here must be free to adapt themselves to the cultural patterns and lifestyles of their local communities. But the church's never ending business, wherever it is, is to love deeply, to minister to human needs, and to change the world by being the instrument through which Christ reveals himself to the world.

Just writing to you about this makes me excited, and to know that churches are seeking renewal makes me rejoice. Renewal is coming!

—Onesimus



the Brethren in Christ Church, have petitioned the government to allow the importation of food aid for the region. So far the church has not been granted permission to import needed food aid.

Christian Care, an interdenominational relief and development agency in Zimbabwe, has asked MCC for food aid. It hopes to get some of the aid to the curfew region. MCC is in the process of putting together a food shipment that will include beans, cooking oil, and 5,000 tons of wheat to be sent in late spring. ■

## **Housing priority assured for Mennonite World Conference—July 24-29**

A second round of conversations with city officials and hotel representatives in Strasbourg in late February has yielded further assurance that housing will be available for MWC participants in July, Executive Secretary Paul Kraybill reports. He has been fielding numerous questions about housing in light of late plans by the Parliament of Europe to hold a meeting in Strasbourg at the same time as the MWC XI Assembly.

In the most recent talks, "we were told that housing facilities are completely guaranteed by the city and that the hotels will honor their contracts," said Kraybill.

"The Parliament is continuing to plan its meeting at the same time, but they are making other housing arrangements not in conflict with the space reserved by Mennonite World Conference and Menno Travel Service."

Kraybill said that so far, more than 3,000 persons have registered for the XI Assembly. "This is short of the goal of 6,000 to 7,000 registrants, the figure upon which the conference budget is based.

There is no deadline for registration and many will probably register at the last minute, Kraybill acknowledged. "But we would like to strongly urge prompt registration so that conference planners have an accurate estimate of attendance and can make appropriate facility plans."

The later a person registers, the less choice there will be in the kind of housing available, added Kraybill. Information on registration may be obtained from the Mennonite World Conference office, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148, (312) 620-7802. ■

## **Messiah College News**

### **Oratorio Society renders Handel's *Messiah***

The 280-voice Grantham Oratorio Society performed Handel's *Messiah* at Messiah College this spring for the tenth time. Accompanied by a 40-piece orchestra and directed by Dr. Ronald R. Sider, the concert was given in Brubaker Auditorium before a packed house.

The oratorio society, founded and for many years directed by Professor Earl Miller, first sang *Messiah* in 1947. It has been a part of the society's repertoire every four years since 1948.

The choir was composed of Messiah College students, faculty members and staff personnel in addition to over 100 interested community residents from as

far as 50 miles away. Donelda Davis and Rebecca Probst, both from the Grantham congregation, were among the soloists.

### **Applications up**

As of March 6, freshman applications were running 14 percent ahead of last year. On that date last year 869 freshmen had applied; this year the count stood at 994.

### **Ministers Conference**

A total of 227 guests attended the 19th annual Ministers Conference at Messiah College, making it the second largest conference on record. The registrants came from seven states, 150 churches, and nearly 20 different denominational groups. The speakers were Dr. David McKenna, president of Asbury Theological Seminary, and Dr. Owen H. Alderfer, C. N. Hostetter Jr. Professor of Theology at Messiah. ■

## **MESSIAH COLLEGE 75**

1909 - CHRIST PREEMINENT - 1984 Grantham, Pennsylvania 17027 - (717) 766-2511

### **Special Message from Messiah College**

The Messiah College Board of Trustees recently acted to establish a membership corporation under the college to develop a retirement center adjoining the Grantham campus.

The college has been discussing the establishment of such a center for several years, and has been giving it serious study for over a year. The retirement center will not be in competition with the efforts of Messiah Village. Indeed, it is because of the Village being filled that Messiah College has repeatedly been confronted with friends (not Brethren in Christ) who have requested that the college exert influence for their admission to the Village. Also of special note should be the fact that it will not be necessary to compete with the Village or other projects for funding; no financial campaign for initial or ongoing funding will be carried on, since the center will be self-funded.

The life-care community at Messiah College is being initiated to care for present friends and to help in the winning of new friends. A life-care community is not unique to Messiah College. A number of colleges and universities have carried out such programs and have found them to be appropriate and desirable, both for the school and for the retirement community. Also, the program of the center will enhance the college's academic opportunities in areas such as nursing, recreation, and the behavioral sciences. It is also anticipated that it will give work opportunities for students.

Please direct any questions regarding the projected life-care community to the college.

**D. Ray Hostetter**  
President



# readers respond

## Thanks to "Air Mail Fund" contributors

I had an inspiration to write nearly two months ago, after we received the January issue, and jotted myself a quick note of some of my thoughts while at home on my half-hour lunch break. Sorry it has taken me this long to actually respond with appreciation for the *Evangelical Visitor*.

It is the only magazine that I get and read cover to cover before the next issue reaches us. I continue to be grateful to those friends who make our subscriptions possible by air mail, but have not told most of them how much I appreciate their thoughtfulness.

I rarely express myself in this magazine as I seem to be short on both time and talent. My inspiration for a letter came when I read Kenneth Gible's article in the January issue on "Now that He has come . . ." I was touched by the thought that Jesus also worked long and hard while on earth. I'm so thankful he came and victory is ours as we trust in our sovereign God.

Thank you for all the variety and effort put into making the magazine what it is. I like the monthly issue with its news of churches, schools and missions along with the inspirational articles.

Shirley Heisey  
Macha Hospital, Zambia

## A new use for the *Visitor*

Since we've come to Brazil, our appreciation of the *Visitor* has continued to deepen. Aside from keeping us "linked" to the life of the Brethren in Christ Church, we recently discovered another value of receiving the *Visitor*.

Soon after Christmas, we started a children's Bible class in our home. Many of the children who live near us don't attend any church, so the exposure to Christ and the Bible they now receive every Saturday afternoon is especially valuable. The class is actually taught by another MCCer, Vickie Klassen, who is very gifted in working with children.

After each class, the children color a picture related to the Bible story they have learned. They like to go outside to color, but needed something on which

to rest their papers. Our stack of *Visitors* was the perfect solution! Now each child has his or her own *Visitor* on which to color.



There are now about 25 children coming to the class, but it continues to grow. Thus, we're grateful that every month you send us another *Visitor*. Keep up the good work.

Dave and Martha Brubaker  
Recife, Brazil

## Discontinue my subscription

I received this letter (an invitation to renew an expiring subscription) and in reply ask that you discontinue my subscription as I don't want it any more. You asked for some suggestions about the *Visitor*. I find it not nearly as interesting as I used to. You need more personal testimonies and not so much business. I wonder where our church is heading. I see an apostate condition. So here are my views.

(Name withheld)  
Pennsylvania

## Sanctified Shalom . . .

I wish to affirm the excellent article, "Sanctified Shalom," by Darrel Brubaker in the March issue.

Darrel was one of my "Timothies" for a number of years. One time we had Darrel and Sheri (now his wife) in for dinner. Before dinner Darrel looked at me and said, "Bishop, who discipled

you?" I said, "Darrel, I am proud of you for directing that question to me." Then I shared several persons and ways by which I was being discipled.

This article "discipled me." The call for the combination of holiness and peace is scriptural and fulfilling. The article does five things: (1) it restates scriptural guidelines, (2) it reinstates a formula for church growth, (3) it reflects the character of Jesus, (4) it recognizes Brethren in Christ distinctives, and (5) it relates to assurance of eternal life.

I am greatly encouraged in having one of our young men write this quality article. It surely does instruct our many newer persons and it certainly inspires our many older persons.

Henry A. Ginder  
Mechanicsburg, PA

## Spiritual fitness . . .

I read with great interest the comments by Onesimus in the March issue. In fact, I read the column about four times, and each time it became more meaningful to me. The article is thought-provoking, applies to our time, and should be given serious attention.

As I look at it, it tells us that there are many things that have a place and time, but for the Christian, there is only one priority in life and that is God. Our first commitment belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ and him only.

Let us not forget the words of Onesimus. Our priorities are very important when time ends for us.

Howard F. Landis, Sr.  
Telford, PA

## Contributions invited for *Dialogue* and *Readers Respond*

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Since each article or letter represents the view of the writer, they do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Brethren in Christ Church.



## Father, may I?

Children like to play follow the leader. "Mother, may I?" is great fun for even my eight- and ten-year-olds. But as we observe kids at play, we readily see that some are reluctant to issue the commands; others demand the leadership role throughout the game; still others derive equal pleasure from the roles of leader and follower, both of which are necessary to the game. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from the children.

Paul is another interesting study in leadership. He says to the Philippians (3:17), "Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you." Does that strike you as egotistical? Think how we modern Christians might react to such a statement from one of our pastors. "What? Follow you instead of letting Christ be the head of the church?"

But an examination of Paul's life shows that his example was a mix of both unapologetic authority and selfless servanthood. "Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you," he states to the Colossians (1:24). "I have become [the church's] servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God. . . ."

Dynamic Christian leaders seem to be those who, like Paul, experience a divine mandate, and then persevere despite difficulties and opposition. In doing so, they effectively further the health and growth of the Body. We cannot all be as influential as Moses, whose authority came from a face-to-face meeting with God and who,

though reluctant to receive, was given great powers to accomplish his tasks. But the principle is still the same today. The biblical command is still, "Go ye." To this call, God adds both the admonition to serve humbly and the promise that, if we do, we will enjoy the benefits of his heavenly kingdom (see Luke 22:26-30). He also promises power and gifts—available to all believers—to carry out what he has requested (Eph. 3:14-21 and 1 Cor. 12).

Should not every Christian, then, be a leader? If we define leadership as loving yet firm guidance of people which is motivated by an unselfish willingness to obey God's commands, then we all have the potential to be Christlike leaders in some area of our lives. Mothers, businessmen, senior citizens, teachers, factory workers, farmers . . . Who can deny that opportunities arise for all of us to direct people toward God?

Let us, therefore, approach God to make a bold exchange. Suppose we would all surrender our fears about leadership, our misguided concepts of passive followership, or even our exercise of self-serving human authority in return for the stewardship of God-offered power and gifts. Envision where the Church could be!

Charles Wesley urged, "Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim. And publish abroad his wonderful name." Imagine the impossibility of meeting such a challenge if we ignore God's call to some dimension of Christian leadership. It is not a matter of "Father, may I?" but rather, "Yes, Father, I will." HJ

In going through old files the other day, I found some notes I had jotted to myself during an afternoon session of the 1982 General Conference. They are as follows, with slight revision:

1. People ought to read their agendas before coming to Conference!
2. Some congregations do a superb job of discussing reports and recommendations with their delegates before Conference. I'm impressed!
3. I wish people could share some of their questions with board members or staff persons before the business sessions. They might get more intelligent answers if they didn't try to put boards and staff "on the spot" on the floor of Conference; time could be given to thought and digging out of pertinent facts. (I can always ask the question during the Conference session if I think I've been given the "brush-off.")
4. We need to learn (or re-learn) the fine art and value

of debate—sharply delineating the issues, and stating the reasons why we believe one approach is more appropriate than another. (Why would I want to know *that* you support a motion; what I want to know are the reasons *why*.)

5. We need to learn how to really listen to each other at Conference, and to be ready to change our minds as our understanding of matters grows. (There is a tremendous difference between having an opinion on a subject and being close-minded.)

Certainly none of these thoughts are original, nor particularly profound. Perhaps I was being too critical of my brothers and sisters that afternoon—a combination of a hard folding chair and a gorgeous day outside? Still, I have the feeling that a few delegates would have profited much from one or more of these five points.

And this year . . . will I jot down much the same comments? Only time will tell. G

## Getting ready for Conference



## General Conference Information

The deadline for registration is very near at hand—*May 20*. If your registration is postmarked after May 20, the registration fee will be \$4 higher. The January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* had a registration form. Ask your pastor for extra copies or simply make photo copies.

Those who need transportation to or from the airport should include **complete** details on the registration form. Some who have already registered will need to send more information. Please do not cause the transportation Committee to make last-minute plans.

Registration at Conference will be on Friday evening, June 29, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. and on Saturday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. In order to register on time, you should arrive no later than 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. Earlier is even better.

The first Conference session will be at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Some very important items of business will be considered in that opening session.

You will be able to check into your room upon arrival. Those arriving after 10:00 p.m. should carefully call this to the attention of the Convention Director. When you move into your room, be sure to check for broken or missing furnishings and report such immediately to the Assistant Convention Director, Dale Wolgemuth.

If you do not already have General Conference Programs, they should be in your hands soon.

If you find it necessary to cancel a paid reservation, full refunds will be made until June 25. Do not send letters with cancellations after June 15; call Paul Hostetler at the number below.

Detailed information on children's ministries appeared in the April issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*. It will not be repeated here. However, please note this additional information: Grades 1-6 will go on field trips on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons and on Thursday morning. The total cost for the three trips will be about \$5.00 per child. These trips are optional, but parents will need to supervise children who do not go.

It is possible that some people rooming in the apartments are planning to prepare and eat meals there. The college has asked us to inform you that this will not be permitted. Only very light refreshments may be served in any college residence hall.

For more information, see the five previous issues of the *Evangelical Visitor* or the printed program. If more information is needed, contact Paul Hostetler, Grantham, PA 17027, or call (717) 766-2621. If no answer, call 766-8419 (Ken Mark residence) and leave a message.

*Note: All the above sounds rather cold and demanding, and I am concerned about that. Please be assured that it is my pleasure to serve you and that I wish it could be done on a more personal basis. God bless you, and a warm thank you for your good cooperation.—Paul Hostetler*

## Missions Convention Information

"Obeying Christ's Commission" is the theme of the Brethren in Christ Missions Convention being held Thursday and Friday, June 28 and 29 at Messiah College, immediately preceding General Conference. Featured speakers at the convention will include Dr. Thomas Hermiz, Dr. Samuel Wolgemuth and Rev. Roy Sider.

Thomas Hermiz is the president of World Gospel Missions. He has taught at Circleville Bible College, pastored for 12 years and served as executive director of the Christian Holiness Association. Known as a speaker at camp meetings and Bible and missions conferences, Dr. Hermiz will be speaking on "A Call to Commitment."

A former pastor and bishop in the Brethren in Christ Church, Samuel Wolgemuth has served with Youth For Christ for a total of 32 years. He was president of the national organization for 8 years and the international organization for 12 years. He served on the Brethren in Christ mission boards from 1955 to 1971, chairing the boards for 14 years. Dr. Wolgemuth will speak on "The Biblical Basis for Missions."

Roy Sider, Secretary of Overseas Ministries for Brethren in

Christ Missions since 1978, has served the church as a pastor and a bishop. Rev. Sider is quite knowledgeable of the overseas ministries of Brethren in Christ Missions, and has a great vision for how our church can better meet the world's needs. He will speak at the convention on the topic, "Why Brethren in Christ Missions?"

Other speakers at the convention will include Rev. John Graybill, missionary to Japan; Dr. Donald Zook, Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions; Rev. Louis Cober, Secretary of Church Relations for Brethren in Christ Missions and Mrs. Rita Williams from Pilgrim Chapel, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The convention will convene at 9:00 a.m. Thursday, June 28 and close Friday at 4:30 p.m. Registration will be on Wednesday, June 27, 7:00-9:00 p.m. and Thursday, 7:30-9:00 a.m. To register, please use the General Conference form, available from your pastor.

Children's programs for children through age 11 will be held during the convention. For more information concerning the Missions Convention, see the past five issues of the *Evangelical Visitor*.